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THE LIFE OF
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LL.D.

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WITH ETCHED PORTRAIT BY MANESSE.

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TO
THE YOUNGER MINISTERS OF METHODISM
ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC
THIS LIFE OF
WILLIAM MORLEY PUNSHON
IS DEDICATED
IN BROTHERLY AFFECTION AND ESTEEM.

P R E F A C E .

IN sending forth this volume I have to express my regret that its publication has been so long delayed. This has arisen from various causes, some of which, at least, it was not in my power to obviate. But I venture to hope that the delay has not been altogether prejudicial. It has given time for the acquisition of ampler biographic material, and for something else which it is more difficult to state precisely. Under any circumstances it could not be an easy task to weigh and analyse, to assign the limits, to give judgment, as it were, upon the qualities and work of one to whom the writer looks up with affectionate reverence ; but if the attempt was to be made at all, a reasonable interval of time, the perspective of a few years, seems necessary. Otherwise, the "personal equation" is apt to be a disturbing one: the biographer cannot move with becoming freedom and calmness, and the reader, possessed by memories not yet adjusted and proportioned, is hardly prepared for the measured judgments of care-

ful biography. I have felt myself but little qualified to estimate Dr. Punshon's rank as a preacher and an orator. Something of presumption must, I fear, characterise the attempt on my part; but to make the attempt when the sound of his voice had scarcely died from the air I found impossible.

[One other thing must be said. Professor Reynar, Dr. Punshon's son-in-law, has furnished the part of this volume that refers to Dr. Punshon's life in Canada. To those who may observe too much either of coincidence or of divergence between his part of the work and mine, I would say that we have written in complete independence of each other, though I am responsible for the work as a whole.]

HANDSWORTH COLLEGE,
September, 1887.

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CHAPTER I.

1824—1837.

Birth and Parentage—Doncaster—Boyish Friendships—Schools and Schoolmasters.

WILLIAM MORLEY PUNSHON, the only child of John and Elizabeth Punshon, was born at Doncaster, on the 29th of May, 1824.

His father, who was a native of Sunderland, came to Doncaster early in life, entered into business, and rose to a position of comfort and credit as a member of the firm of Wilton and Punshon, mercers. He was a good Christian, and a hearty Methodist; not distinguished, so far as is known, for ability, but much respected for his consistent character, and steady devotion to the interests of religion and morals. In the Methodist Society he held various offices, including that of Circuit Steward and Sunday School Superintendent. For the latter office he had the special qualifications of a strong love for children, and an affectionate, cheerful disposition. He died December 9th, 1840, having survived his wife two years and a half.

Elizabeth Morley, the wife of John Punshon, was the second child and eldest daughter of William and

Margaret Morley. Her father's family came originally from the neighbourhood of Castle Howard, and settled on the banks of the river Don, first at Sprotbrough, and afterwards at Doncaster. The roll of Doncaster freemen contains the following entry: "November 18th, 1796.—William Morley, clerk, was sworn a true townsman of Doncaster, and admitted and made free to all the benefits and privileges thereof, before Nicholas Robinson, Esq., Mayor.—Entered by John Stannell, sergeant-at-mace."

In the years 1825 and 1826, the same roll records the admission of Isaac and William, the sons of William Morley. The last-named was the eldest son. He died in December 1838, aged forty-one. Isaac Morley lived to become a wealthy and influential man; was twice Mayor of Doncaster, was knighted in the year 1841, and died in 1879, aged seventy-eight. Besides these two sons, William and Margaret Morley had two daughters, Elizabeth and Margaret. The latter, born in 1803, was married in March 1825 to the Rev. Benjamin Clough, Missionary to India. A few weeks later, she and her husband, together with the Rev. Spence Hardy, sailed for Ceylon, where they arrived, after some danger and many discomforts, in the following September. Mrs. Clough was a true missionary's wife, a woman of deep piety, and much courage and self-control. Her course was a short one. She died at Colombo in less than two years after landing on the island, leaving a memory not unworthy to be associated with that of the saintly women who adorn the annals of early Methodism. Extracts from her journals and correspondence were edited by Dr. Adam Clarke,

who refers to them as showing "to what a state of useful excellence a Christian education, conducted under the influence of the Spirit of God, can raise the human heart." A single entry in her Journal, written at sea, furnishes a link between the saintly Margaret Clough and her sister's child:—

"Sunday, May 29th, 1825.

"This is my dear little nephew's birthday. May the God of his father graciously condescend to take this tender infant into His peculiar care; and, if spared, may he be an ornament to the Church of God, and a comfort to his parents in their declining years."

Elizabeth Morley, the elder sister, was married to John Punshon, at Cantley Church, on the 13th March, 1823. To her also "brief life" was the portion given. Her health was generally delicate, and after a few years of happiness as wife and mother she was taken from the faithful husband who was soon to follow, and from the child who, as it will be seen, mourned for his mother to the end of his days. She died on the 12th of June, 1838.

The number of comparatively early deaths in these family records is noticeable. William Morley Punshon's father died at the age of forty-seven; his mother at thirty-eight; his uncle at forty-one; his aunt at twenty-three. There was little promise of length of days for the child of such a household.

Upon a blank leaf in John Punshon's Bible is the following entry, written by himself: "William Morley Punshon was born 29th May, 1824, at half-past six in the morning. Baptized Sunday, 4th July, 1824, by Rev. J. Cusworth. Registered at Doncaster Church 16th January, 1828." Mr. Cusworth was the Superintendent Minister of the Doncaster Circuit.

[The home of which William Morley Punshon was the solitary child was one of those quiet, well-ordered, godly households which have ever been among the chief sources of the strength of Methodism. Outward and visible signs of worldly living were conspicuously absent. The inner and animating spirit of the family life was deeply religious; the manners and modes of thinking those of a more mild and genial Puritanism. The round of Sunday and week-day services, prayer meetings and class meetings, lovefeasts and band meetings, dull and distasteful enough when looked upon from without, had inexhaustible charm for those to whose spiritual life they ministered. Then there was plain but cheerful hospitality for the preachers as they came and went in ceaseless itinerations; now and again a party of Christian friends—not without prayer and the singing of hymns; and at its appointed time, the crowning festival of the year, the Missionary Meeting, with the coming together of friends from a distance, and great speeches, and much joyful kindling of soul. The life of such families moved in a tranquil round, none the less rich in happiness because the pursuit of pleasure formed no part of it.] A certain dread of the world led to strictness in the matter of recreations and companionships. Lines were sharply drawn, and good and evil brought into clear and unmistakable opposition. Questions that in our own day are considered open questions, or settled, after some casuistry, in favour of pleasing oneself, were decided by swift appeal to Scripture or pious tradition. Restraints thus enforced might indeed be resented where the administration was formal and

unloving, but where love to God and one another was at once the law and the life of the household, there were no happier families in happy England than those of the whole-hearted Methodists of sixty years ago.

But there were other influences beside those of his home that wrought upon Morley Punshon's childhood, and through it upon all his after years. He owed something—perhaps it should be said much—to his native place. Though Doncaster can hardly be counted among English historic towns of the first rank, its associations are sufficiently varied and interesting to move the imagination. From Roman, Saxon, Danish times, through the Middle Ages, during the Tudor, Stuart, Georgian periods, the stream of its history never wholly disappears. Its traditions are perhaps best known in connection with Southey's veracious memoirs of Dr. Daniel Dove. "Reader," says he, "if thou carest little or nothing for the Yorkshire river Don, and for the town of Doncaster, and for the circumstances connected with it, I am sorry for thee." In the middle of the sixteenth century, Evelyn describes Doncaster as "a large, fair town, famous for great wax-lights and good stockings." A few years later the corporation, in an address to Charles II., boasted that "they had not one factious, seditious person in their town, being all true sons of the Church of England and loyal subjects; and that in the height of all the late troubles and confusion, they never had any conventicles amongst them, the nurseries and seed-plots of sedition and rebellion." Southey adds ruefully, "There are conventicles there now of every denomin-

ation." To the honest, Church-and-Tory soul of Wesley's biographer this was a state of things to be deplored, though he divides the blame between the government, "which made no other provision for the religious instruction of the townspeople than one church, one vicar, and one curate," and Archbishop Sharp, who had secured the rectorial tithes for his own family, and starved the vicarage. As early as 1764, there was a "room" or preaching-place belonging to the Methodists in Doncaster. In the April of that year, Wesley, finding it too small to contain the people, preached in a yard near the bridge. He describes the crowds that flocked to hear him as "a wild, yet civil multitude," and, three years later, as "wild and stupid enough, yet all tolerably civil, many attentive, and some affected." In July 1770 he writes in his Journal:—

"I rode to Doncaster, and preached at noon in the new house, one of the neatest in England. It was sufficiently crowded, and (what is more strange) with serious and attentive hearers. What was more unlikely, some years since, than that such a house, or such a congregation, should be seen here!"

In 1797 Doncaster appears in the Minutes of the Methodist Conference as the head of a Circuit.

Although not sworn and registered upon the Burgess-roll, William Morley Punshon was, like his grandfather and uncles, a "true townsman of Doncaster." He was proud of his native town, of its ancient memories, of the old parish church where its many generations had been baptized and buried.

With his companion Richard Ridgill¹ he passed

¹ The Rev. Richard Ridgill, of Wynberg, Cape Town, President, in 1885, of the South African Wesleyan Methodist Conference.

daily under its chancel window, loitering or scampering to and from school, blithe enough when the sun was shining, but whistling to keep their courage up if the shades of evening had fallen. Within the church were many things that appealed to his quick-springing fancies, and made impressions that he never lost. The great chancel window, dark and meaningless as seen from without, was radiant with prophets and apostles walking in a world of light. He looked up with wonder at the quaint old pictures in the roof. He spelled out the epitaph on the altar-like tomb of Robin of Doncaster:—

“Howe, howe, who is heare?

I Robin of Doncastere, and Margaret my fere.

That I spent, that I had;

That I gave, that I have;

That I left, that I lost. A.D. 1579.

Quoth Robertus Byrkes, who in this world did reign

Threescore years and seven, and yet lived not one.”

He listened with silent delight to the great organ, whose mellow pipes were said to be worth their weight in silver; the organ at whose opening in the year 1739, the curate, Mr. Fawkes, preached in praise of sacred music, when, after touching upon the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, he turned to the new organ, and in a fine rapture exclaimed, “But O what—O what—what shall I call *thee*, thou divine box of sounds!”

The Doncaster of Morley Punshon’s childhood, uninvaded as yet by railways, was a calm, leisurely, thriving place—always excepting the annual race-week, when calmness and leisure fled before the crowds that flocked from every quarter. An old town, with plenty of capacity for modern life; con-

scious of its past, yet not lagging behind the times ; somewhat churchly, though without the perilous dignity of a cathedral and a close,—it was “meet nurse” for a child susceptible from the first to whatever was venerable, quaint, or impressive, yet summoned to earnest, practical life, alike by his own qualities and the call of God. He never lost his interest in the town of his birth, but continued to watch from a distance all that concerned its welfare. When in 1853 the church was destroyed by fire, few grieved for it more sincerely. He rejoiced in the noble building that rose in its place ; but the new church could never be to him what the old one was. A landmark of his life was gone.

It is difficult, at this distance of time, to account for the method pursued in his education. His school life was over before he had completed his fourteenth year, and during that all too brief period he had been to at least four different schools. This was doing less than justice to a child already giving signs of more than ordinary powers. The short duration of his school life, in itself much to be regretted, was in effect still further diminished by the frequent change of teachers and modes of instruction. The compensation for this lay, to a great extent, in a mental activity that had plans of its own, and reached out to right and left after the objects of its desire. As with many another youth, who, in the pursuit of knowledge and the cultivation of his powers, has been a law unto himself, the result went far towards justifying the method ; but, considering the career that lay before young Punshon, one cannot but regret that in his eager, quick-budding spring-

time the means of culture and discipline were not more abundantly forthcoming.

He went to school for a time to one Mr. Graham, in Doncaster, and afterwards to the grammar school. Here he and his friend Ridgill, together with two other boys, formed themselves into a society or brotherhood, to which he gave the name of the "*Quaternity*," the object of which was,—nothing so tame as mutual improvement, but the pursuit of adventures. The terms of their compact bound them to relate at their weekly meeting whatever of valiant deed or hairbreadth escape had happened since they last met. It may be imagined with what abundant colouring of romance these young knights-errant reported the adventures that never fail to come to heroes of tender age who are on the look-out for them. Many years afterwards he writes, "Oh those days of the Q.! There's a glamour about them, notwithstanding their folly, which endears them to memory still."

When about five years old, and walking with his nurse, he was on one occasion tired, and unwilling to go further. But the promise that he should see Stirling Castle fired his imagination, and put new strength into his feet. He trudged along bravely till, by-and-bye, they came to a public-house with the sign of "Stirling Castle," when the cruel disappointment broke upon him, and he sat down by the roadside and cried bitterly.

His love of poetry showed itself very early, and he would commit it to memory almost without effort. An old friend, still living in Doncaster, writes:—"My earliest recollection of Dr. Punshon is that of

hearing him, when eight years old, repeat, standing on a chair, Byron's lines beginning 'The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold.' This he did in a vigorous and spirited style which I have remembered ever since." Of his boyish collection of books, a few volumes remained with him through life. They include a *County Album*, with 400 *Topographical Hieroglyphics*, evidently much prized, with the inscription "W. M. P., Doncaster, 1830, No. 1." Piety is represented by *Bogatzy's Treasury*, a gift from his father, and *Abbott's Young Christian*, from Mr. Roscoe, his schoolmaster; and poetry by an edition of *Milton*, in two small volumes, and a copy of *Pope's Homer's Iliad*, that had previously belonged to his mother.

Between him and his mother there was the tenderest affection, and that intimate companionship and perfect understanding which seem to be reserved for mothers and their only sons. As a little child he was at her side, not seeking protection, but ready to afford it. Who should be master of the house and defender of the hearth, next to his father, but himself? His mother never forgot how one day when his father was from home, he calmly seated himself at the head of the table, and looking at her, said, "My dear, what shall I have the pleasure of helping you to?"

From the Doncaster Grammar School he was removed in 1835, being then eleven years old, to a boarding school at Tadcaster, kept by Messrs. Stoner and Elsworth. The earliest of his letters that has been preserved belongs to this period. It is addressed to his Uncle Clough the missionary, at Colombo.

The penmanship is above reproach or criticism, a marvel of delicacy and beauty, giving promise of the free and elegant handwriting for which he was afterwards distinguished. The letter itself is an admirable specimen of the formal epistle which, once or twice in a half-year, used to minister to the pride both of schoolmaster and parent in the days when letter-writing was a recognised branch of polite education. Here are none of the genial crudities of style and spelling that characterise the schoolboy letter when it is spontaneous and unrevised; but, instead, faultless writing, mature sentiments, and sentences constructed after the best traditions of the Johnsonian school. How many copies were written and corrected before it took its final shape can only be guessed at, but in such expressions as “the healthy town of Tadcaster,” “the useful parts of the mathematics,” and “the Annual Conference now assembled,” though the hand is that of William Morley Punshon, aged twelve years, the voice is surely that of one or other of those respected gentlemen, Messrs. Stoner and Elsworth:—

“VICARAGE HOUSE ACADEMY, TADCASTER.

“August 11th, 1836.

“MY VERY DEAR UNCLE,

“Your letter to my cousin reached us while we were on a visit to my grandfather at Hull. My mother then expressed a wish for me to write to you. In compliance with her desire, and with great pleasure and satisfaction to myself, I now embrace the earliest opportunity of addressing you.

“You will perceive by this letter that I am now at school, and will, therefore, be desirous of knowing how I am proceeding with my education. The Academy in which I have now been a pupil more than a year is pleasantly situated in the healthy town of Tadcaster, and conducted by Messrs. Stoner and Elsworth (Mr. Stoner is brother, and Mr. Elsworth brother-in-law, to the late Rev. D. Stoner), under whose superintendence

I am endeavouring to acquire a knowledge of the Latin, Greek, and French languages.

"I am also studying the useful parts of the mathematics, and the general routine of an English education, such as the English grammar, history, geography with the use of the globes and the construction of maps, etc.; in all of which branches I flatter myself that I am making some humble progress. As to my writing, you will, of course, be able to judge from this letter, which I present to you as a specimen.

"As to information, I am afraid I shall not be able to communicate much. The first thing which strikes my attention, and which will, I have no doubt, be interesting to you, is the Annual Conference now assembled. Dr. Bunting has been chosen President, and Mr. Newton Secretary, by very great majorities. This, of course, shows the respect and confidence which the Conference still retain for those blessed men, notwithstanding the vain attempts made by a certain party to weaken and, if possible, to destroy that confidence. Medals have been struck to commemorate the first Conference in the town of Birmingham, and gold ones were presented at a public breakfast to the President and Secretary, and silver ones to the American and Irish representatives.

The appointment for Doncaster will, I suppose, be as last year, viz., Messrs. R. Pilter, J. Bromley of notoriety, and John Callaway, late a Missionary in Ceylon, with whom I daresay you are acquainted.

"I am happy to say, through the mercy of God, my dear father, mother, and cousin, as well as myself, are enjoying a very good degree of health, of which blessing I hope you and my dear aunt and cousins are in the full possession.

"I remain, dear uncle,

"Your affectionate nephew,

"WILLIAM MORLEY PUNSHON."

REV. BENJAMIN CLOUGH, Wesleyan Minister,
Colombo, Island of Ceylon.

From Tadcaster he was removed to the school of Mr. Thomas Roscoe, at Heanor, in Derbyshire. Mr. Roscoe was a schoolmaster of high local repute. He has been described as "a competent, good-natured, resolute teacher, with a somewhat commanding presence, and the easy manners of a country squire or doctor, rather than the stiffness of a pedagogue." Here also he remained but for a short time. At the end of the year 1837 his school life terminated, and

almost immediately afterwards he entered the office of his grandfather Morley, whose business as a timber merchant had been removed from Doncaster to Hull. He consequently left home. His child-life was over—pathetically early, as he was soon to realize.

On the whole, it cannot be said that he owed much to his schools and schoolmasters. This is not to suggest inefficiency on their part; and, indeed, the clerky qualifications with which he entered Messrs. Morley & Sons' counting-house prove the contrary, so far, at least, as the routine of an English education is concerned, and as that term was understood fifty years ago. His teachers did their duty by him, but the circumstances were against any powerful and lasting impressions being received in the course of his schooling, which was too short and too frequently interrupted to allow of continuity of teaching, and progressive, well-ordered study. With his quick and versatile mind, and extraordinarily retentive memory, few things in the way of scholarship would have been impossible to him. Had opportunity afforded, and desire led that way, his success in languages and literature might be counted certain. But the real passion of his boyhood was for poetry and politics.

He had confided to his friend Ridgill, as they sauntered together under the elms that overshadow the Great North Road near Doncaster, that his chief ambition was to obtain a seat in Parliament. When still a child he could name nearly all the members of the House of Commons, and the places for which they sat. He had begun to collect their autographs, and had his opinion as to their abilities. He delighted in the opening genius of Macaulay and Gladstone, and

the maturer excellences of Peel and Palmerston. For it was political eloquence rather than politics proper that fascinated him. Parliamentary oratory in its every kind, from the set speech to the twists and turns of debate, had an irresistible charm for him, second only, if indeed second, to that of poetry. Perhaps no English boy has ever carried in his memory, or poured out to his companions, more poetry and political oratory than William Morley Punshon.

Not the best mental discipline, it may be said, or the most serviceable of accomplishments. Possibly not, but in these matters there is a factor to be taken into account which has a thousand times upset theories and baffled calculations, viz., the instinctive self-determination of the nature towards that for which it has a hidden and overmastering affinity. The youth who without counsel or encouragement thereto, and against the seeming fitness of things, must needs write verses, or paint pictures, or compose orations, had better be left to do so, though he be unable to explain his impulse to himself or any one else. Young Punshon's love of poetry and eloquence was of this kind, and must have its way. It would do more for him in the long run than "the useful parts of the mathematics," conscientiously taught by Messrs. Stoner and Elsworth. His instinct was a true interpreter and a safe guide.

For one life-lasting possession he was indebted to his school days at Heanor. There he met with Gervase Smith, and there began the close and tender friendship which, unshadowed by a moment's coolness or mistrust, each counted among the chief

blessings of his life. For mutual devotion and faithful companionship, for sympathy with each other's griefs and loyal delight in each other's happiness, the friendship of William Morley Punshon and Gervase Smith will bear comparison with the purest friendships of history or romance.

CHAPTER II.

1837—1843.

HULL, SUNDERLAND. Aged 13 to 19.

Counting-House in Hull.—Early Love of Poetry.—Death of his Mother.—Conversion.—Joins the Methodist Society.—“The Menticultural Society.”—Preaches his First Sermon.—Death of his Father.—Leaves Hull for Sunderland.—Church Work.—Searchings of Heart.—Joint Authorship, *Wild Flowers*, a volume of verse.

BEFORE completing his fourteenth year Morley Punshon had entered upon the life of a junior clerk. To such routine work of the counting-house as fell to his share he was fully equal, but his ways were not those that lead to commercial greatness. It would have been impossible to mistake him for a “successful merchant” in embryo. The main current of his thoughts and aspirations continued to flow in the channel it had already made for itself. He read poetry more eagerly than ever, and tried his ‘prentice hand at writing it. He carried on a voluminous correspondence with his friend Ridgill, chiefly on the two subjects that shared his affections. It is to be supposed that his duties were not very heavy, or his superiors very exacting, for it is said that many of his office hours were devoted to the study of political oratory and the poets.

His letters contained copious extracts of verse, together with brief comments and criticisms. One such budget includes no less than forty extracts, ranging from four lines to twenty in length. The comments cannot be said to show any precocious critical faculty, but rather a catholic appetite that revelled alike in the didactic and the sentimental, and a keen enjoyment of musical verse, whether softly flowing or sonorous. In his list there are perhaps too many minor poets, if, indeed, *minimus* would not be the fitter designation of some; and certain of their productions are hardly worthy of his admiring comments; but he was now browsing at large, and dainty discrimination seldom goes along with youth's keen appetite. Remembering, moreover, how Bowles's sonnets, which no one now reads, awoke the love of poetry in Coleridge, one must not deny to inferior writers the power to confer great and real obligations on young imaginative minds. The selections include Burns, Byron, and Scott at one end of the scale, and Rowe and Warton, Whitehead and Dibdin at the other. Rowe's lines on "The Rose and the Thistle" are marked "Good. Rowe is better as a translator. *Vide* his Lucan;" Burns's "Scots wha hae," "the sweetest, most spirit-stirring piece I ever read." There are several selections from Byron, who, as may be supposed, moved him greatly. *The Gladiator* he would not reckon among his best, but it is very fine. The stanza beginning

"A king sate on the rocky brow,"

is "beautiful, grand, majestic." In the opening stanza,

"The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece,"

“Byron is himself again.” Scott’s lines,

“They came like mountain torrent red,
That thunders o’er its rocky bed,” etc.,

he “would almost call perfect.” Heber’s missionary hymn, particularly the verse beginning—

“Waft, waft, ye winds His story,”

is “sweet, simple, and elegant beyond description.”

An extract from Croly is marked “not bad;” Southey is “good;” Warton is “tolerable;” one Mitchell is marked as “truly patriotic,” and Mrs. Hemans is “sweet, tender, and—*feminine!*”

Along with these poetical selections there came from time to time verses of his own, to be approved or criticised by his friend. The earliest of these—the poet just fourteen years old—reveals him suffering from “the whim of cruel beauty.” It belongs in fact to the long series of “Rejected Addresses” in which young bards have from the beginning sought relief from the real or imaginary woe of unrequited affection. In these cases, it is believed, the joys of authorship far surpass the griefs which furnish the pleasing theme. With very young poets it is undoubtedly so, and, in spite of gloomy hints to the contrary, the writer of the “Address to Cruel Beauty” is in fairly good spirits as he indites the closing stanza:—

“Though my offering may be slighted,
With existence love shall end;
Though my dearest hopes are blighted,
Still I wish to call thee friend.”

But in the midst of all these pleasant imaginings there fell upon him an unexpected and overwhelming blow, a sorrow that crushed out at once all senti-

mental griefs, and with them well-nigh extinguished the natural happiness of his young life. On June 12th, 1838, his mother died. The loss was irreparable, and he felt at once that it was so. He was struck to the heart by a sense of loneliness that lasted for many years, that was renewed in seasons of depression and ill-health, and would return upon him again and again even in busiest, brightest days. While mourning for his mother, he seems to have mourned over himself, feeling the pathos and pitifulness of his orphanhood. It was as though, while standing by her grave, he saw himself, an affectionate, impulsive, imaginative boy, craving love and needing counsel, going his way henceforth alone, amid innumerable possibilities of evil and overthrow. His grief returned upon himself in pity and foreboding. He had read Cowper; he was familiar with his poem, *On the Receipt of My Mother's Picture*, and took to himself in deep despondency the lines:—

“ My mother ! when I learned that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed ?
Hover'd thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun ? ”

As soon as he reached home, he wrote a hasty note to Richard Ridgill:—

“ We are all buried in profound grief at our house. You can sympathise with me because you have been in the same circumstances as myself. I feel that I could say with Cain, ‘ My punishment is greater than I can bear. ’ ”

Mrs. Punshon was buried under the shadow of the old church, near the entrance to the south transept. Henceforth, it was sacred ground to her son. Thirty years after, his wife by his side, he knelt and kissed

his mother's gravestone, and spoke with emotion of the great loss her death had been to him.

He returned to Hull almost immediately after the funeral, and in a few days wrote to Ridgill, enclosing some lines expressive of his grief. They need not be given here. Like most productions at such an early age, even in the case of persons possessing real poetic gifts, they are conventional, full of set phrases and the echoes of other verse. He adds :—

“The above cannot be called poetry, but was written with a view to divert my thoughts from the contemplation of one subject ; for when I am alone, and fall into an abstracted vein of thought, I am almost driven to madness. . . . I need your sympathy and commiseration. I have heard your father is worse. I am very sorry to hear it. . . . I want more courage than I possess to comfort my poor father.”

A few weeks later Ridgill's father died, and the two boys felt themselves still more closely drawn together. William writes :—

LETTER TO R. RIDGILL.

“HULL, *July 23rd*, 1838.

“I am not at all the right person to undertake the office of a comforter, but . . . must attempt it. An alleviating circumstance in your bereavement was this, that it was long expected. . . . Remember you will still be the support of your sister. You must not forget that. . . . I came to Doncaster on the Tuesday, and Saturday was the day of interment. During that time I only saw her thrice. . . . There was such a heavenly smile on her countenance, it seemed as if a ray of glory had enveloped her form ere life's embers had departed. When I reviewed the past . . . the burden seemed insupportable, and a dark and dismal prospect of a still more dark and cheerless future burst upon my unwilling view with scarce a ray of light to dissipate the clouds of woe. I felt that I had lost her, that I should never hear the music of her voice again . . . that the guiding-star round which the orbit of my destiny revolved, was for ever eclipsed. . . . When I mused upon these things my spirit groaned within me, and I was ready to sink under the weight, and to consign my existence to despair. From this state of darkness I was partially, if not wholly, roused by the voice of friendship pouring its sympathetic accents into my afflicted soul. Yes, and though dark thoughts sometimes obtrude

themselves, I possess more of serenity than I did. Let me entreat you to be comforted. . . . I roused myself at your solicitation ; therefore, if you have any love for me . . . bear it patiently, if not with the endurance of a stoic . . . with the resignation of a philosopher, and the understanding of a man."

This letter reveals, or perhaps suggests what is known from other sources, the conflict through which he was now passing. It is noticeable in the above letter that allusions to religion are avoided, and there is something like an affectation of a philosophic strain. Considering the Christian influences to which he had always shown himself susceptible, and his ready, almost instinctive, use of religious language, this seems to require explanation. The truth is, that he avoided the subject, not from indifference or dislike, but from the painful intensity with which it was occupying his thoughts. He was touched and troubled to the bottom of his heart. He had felt the foundations of all things earthly give way. Things spiritual and eternal alone seemed real. He longed for faith in Christ, and for peace with God. The old, old question, "What must I do to be saved?" had awakened within his soul, and was crying for answer.

On the 3rd October, 1838, he writes to his father :—

"Oh! my dearest father, ever since the death of my mother I have been under deep and strong convictions of sin. Peace of mind I cannot obtain. Loud and frequent have been my prayers to Almighty God for mercy. But the heavens are as brass unto me. . . . I sometimes think there must be some hidden sin which I have not yet given up. 'Oh that I knew my sins forgiven!' is my oft-repeated cry. I have no happiness ; though I may appear cheerful, yet inwardly I am all discontent and grief. Pray for me, my dearest father, that I may speedily receive the blessing I require."

To this his father replied :—

"MY EVER DEAREST AND BELOVED WILLIAM,—Remember the precious word of promise, 'I love them that love Me, and those that seek Me early

shall find Me.' The Lord Whom you seek will be found of you when you search for Him with your whole heart. My dear lad, I spread your letter before the Lord upon my knees, and endeavoured to plead His word and promises on your behalf, and I have faith . . . that He will most assuredly set your soul at liberty, and speak peace to your troubled mind. He gave His blessed Son Jesus to die for you. Take encouragement, He that shall come will come, and not tarry."

The early influences of home and Christian training, childish convictions of sin, and tender thoughts of God that had seemed to come and go, had really passed into his soul, and were now awakened and renewed. His mother's death, his father's appeals, wrought upon a heart whose preparation for receiving Christ was further advanced than he was aware. He was, indeed, not far from the kingdom of God. The ministry of the Rev. S. Romilly Hall, then stationed in Hull, a probationer in his third year, was of much service. Mr. Hall was a faithful and fearless preacher and pastor. Clear in his views, energetic, practical, not to be satisfied with generalities and uncertainties, ever pressing his young friend to trust in Christ for salvation,—his was just the guidance needed. Perhaps the total dissimilarity of temperament was an element of power to the young minister in counselling the sorrowful, tender-hearted lad. After much spiritual conflict the way of salvation was revealed to him. He found rest to his soul. He wrote to his aunt:—

"It was on the 29th of November. I had previously been in great distress of mind, when, as I was walking on the dock side, I was met by the Rev. S. R. Hall, who urged upon me the necessity of immediate belief. Then and there I was enabled to lay hold on my Saviour, and peace immediately sprang up in my heart."

This 29th of November, 1838, he being then fourteen years and a half old, he always regarded

as the day of his spiritual birth. His whole after-life, inward and outward, was but the growth, the unfolding, the leading forth into ten thousand developments, of what he then received. Of all the varied influences, mental, moral, and social, by which he was afterwards affected, there was none that constituted a fresh beginning, or removed from its commanding position in his history the spiritual event then consummated. His conversion as a boy is the key to his character and work as a man.

He lost no time in joining the Methodist Society. There is an entry in the minute-book of the George-yard Leaders' Meeting which shows that, after the usual probation, he was proposed, with nine others, for admission into the Society at a Leaders' Meeting held on the 23rd May, 1839.

From the first his spiritual life responded readily to the institutions and ministries of Methodism. He was its child, not only by descent and the force of circumstances, but by a real interior kinship. It met his wants, it at once awakened and satisfied his desires. He was in sympathy with its aims and methods. He understood with quick insight what it meant by its class-meetings and lovefeasts. He threw himself into its round of religious activity. He became a teacher, and, after a while, the secretary of a Sunday-school. He attended prayer-meetings, assisted in conducting them, and in May 1840 his name appears upon the Prayer-Leaders' Plan as that of a recognised labourer in this department of Christian work. Meantime, his desire for Christian fellowship was not exhausted by attendance at the class-meeting. In addition to meeting

in the class of Mr. John Lowther, he was one of a band of three youths who met in a vestry of Waltham Street Chapel at seven o'clock on Sunday mornings, for prayer and mutual help and counsel.

There were no serious distractions from without, or questionings from within. Religion was practical and experimental, undisturbed by influences critical or speculative. It was a time of happy, healthy growth; and while his life as a Christian was being deepened, the spirit of Methodism gave direction and character to its growth. When the time for his entering the ministry should arrive, the extent to which Methodist doctrine, discipline, and traditions had passed into his life and become a part of himself, would be apparent.

Soon after going to reside in Hull, he made the acquaintance of a youth named John Lyth, subsequently the Rev. Dr. Lyth. They became fast friends, and companions in religious life and mental cultivation. With the assistance of one or two others they formed a society for mutual improvement, to which they gave the name of *The Mental-cultural Society*. It consisted of some eight or ten members, and two corresponding members, of whom Richard Ridgill was one. It is to be noted that every one of these subsequently entered the ministry. A discussion every week and a lecture once a month was the society's rule, and at these meetings Morley Punshon made his first attempts at debating and lecturing.

LETTER TO R. RIDGILL.

"HULL, December 17th, 1839.

"... Figure to yourself our worshipful assemblage, straining their eyes out of their sockets for lack of knowledge. In the chair of state

president of the awful presence, sits Professor Lyth, his hair on end 'like quills upon the fretful porcupine,' . . . his hand raised to keep up the dignity of his presidential office. Opposite him your humble servant, with eye upturned, listening with breathless interest, my foot keeping time with the fine-turned periods. To the left of the president, F. Smith, in a recumbent posture, is gazing on the lecturer's countenance as if he were a phrenological student; while brother Locking, in an oratorical attitude, is enlightening us on the importance of a right improvement of time, or the character of Artaxerxes Longimanus."

To these humours concerning "the Menticultural" succeed certain sentimentalities which are confided to his friend. He longs to be in Doncaster again, and has a vision of home happiness once more. Possibly his father may marry again. Suppose he should marry some lady with a daughter, who would thereby become his sister, and so afford him a joy he had never known. Ah! to have a sister, generous, noble, just, romantic! What bliss that would be! And, moved by such a vision, prose becomes inadequate, and he must needs break into verse.

To another correspondent, his cousin, Miss Panton, of Sunderland, he wrote frequently and freely. His letters reveal him very distinctly,—an affectionate and somewhat romantic youth, whose happiness, quickly kindled, and overflowing in even too copious sentences, was broken by intervals of depression to which physical languor often ministered. Mentally quick and versatile, susceptible to every suggestion of the sublime or the beautiful, with a power of language which in its exuberance he could not always manage, there is perhaps but one thing, the absence of which at this time is to be regretted. He was now thinking, talking, and writing at a great rate; prose and verse, letters, essays, and speeches,

were poured forth in abundance ; but of steady and systematic reading, such as would supply the discipline, and furnish the material for all this mental activity, there are not the traces that could be wished. What has been already said of the disadvantages and compensations of his educational course, applies to this period of his life as well as to his school days.

Writing March 31st, 1840, he describes his pleasure in hearing Mr. W. Dawson preach from the words, " Will ye also be His disciples ? " and repeats for his cousin's benefit some of the illustrations used. Dr. Beaumont was to preach that evening, and he declares it too bad that James Parsons was to preach at the Independent chapel at the same time, and only hoped it was not done intentionally. He then refers to the answers his cousin had sent to certain riddles ; and soon after launches into an eloquent declamation on the time-honoured virtue of perseverance, in which the Greeks of Marathon, Joan of Arc, Masaniello, Cromwell, and Napoleon sweep before us as in a whirlwind. After this flight, which, with all its boyish exaggeration, reveals true oratoric instinct, he drops smilingly to earth again, saying, " Is not this now a very pleasing digression, which has helped to fill up my letter ? I could have gone on for a long time, but must not encroach too much on good nature." The " M. S." (Menticultural Society) was doing well. They had had a biblical night ; F. Smith taking a Greek Bible, W. M. P. Latin, J. Lyth Hebrew, R. Locking German, in order to mark variations in the text.

On the 29th May, 1840, he again writes to his cousin. He acknowledges a certain sense of exhilaration at the absence of one of his "governors," an uncle much addicted to the use of tobacco. His wife having "sweetly, and he must say justifiably, published a bill of pains and penalties against the practice of smoking" anywhere on the premises over which she had control, the uncle inflicted his presence upon the juniors at times when they much desired to be without it. In the absence of this said uncle they had denounced this procedure with much eloquence, finding relief in so doing, and rapturously applauding their own utterances. He hints that the only case in which smoking might be tolerated would be as a cure for disappointed affections. He reminds his cousin that it is Royal Oak Day, and that on that day sixteen years ago he had entered the world, "the bells of St. George's, Doncaster, ringing a merry peal on the birth of William Morley Punshon."

Then follows a more serious strain; his life has been full of the lovingkindness and tender mercies of the Lord. He regrets his inherent indolence, and his love of the romantic:—

"I feel a native reluctance to enter upon the perusal of any work that has been represented to me as profound. The light, gliding eloquence of a Bromley is more pleasing to my ears than the solid reasonings of a Dixon. But I am wandering. I do feel thankful to God for all His mercies, but especially that it has pleased Him to make me a partaker of the joys of religion. Often in our private band I feel my soul drawn out in gratitude to God that He has graciously visited me; for what am I that He should have mercy upon *me*? . . . What my future destiny may be is known only to God. I have had serious thoughts upon this subject. It has sometimes entered my mind that my destination is the ministry. (Silence! for you are the first to whom I have mentioned it.) I have at times felt a desire strong and ardent to save souls. At other times my motives have been somewhat earthly, and I have checked the desire

altogether, lest I should be seeking rather the applause of men than the honour which cometh from God. Be that as it may, I am thankful that I am, in my humble way, working for God."

The Missionary Anniversary had been held in Hull. The Rev. Robert Wood, of Huddersfield, preached in the morning "a most excellent sermon;" the Rev. J. H. Beech, of Snaith, in the afternoon; the Rev. B. Clough (his uncle) in the evening. On Monday morning was the meeting; collection £21. On Monday evening the Rev. James Everett preached from "He that converteth a sinner," etc. "What a sermon! It almost carried the people away." On Tuesday evening he heard the Rev. Samuel Waddy, of Sheffield, from "What shall it profit a man," etc.,—"a very learned, forcible, and eloquent discourse." On Wednesday morning he was at the breakfast meeting, and heard addresses from Messrs. Reece, Everett, Clough, Waddy, and Duncan. In the evening another meeting was held,

"and such a meeting, Waltham Street Chapel filled almost to overflowing. I was on the platform, and had a splendid view. The first speaker was the Rev. R. Reece, who was in the chair; then the Rev. R. Wood, whose speech I did not hear; then the Rev. J. Everett. In speaking of the length of time the Missionary Reports would live compared with other reports, he said, 'They will live after yours are converted into winding-sheets for pilchards and red herrings!' Dr. Alder was the next speaker, and gave us some statistical accounts of Missions in different parts of the world. The Rev. S. D. Waddy gave a very forcible and impressive speech, after which the collection was made. And what do you think was the collection? *One hundred and seventy-six pounds eleven shillings and sixpence.* Bravo!"

The "M. S." still prospered. A new member had just been elected, after giving a specimen of his talents. 'The list now consisted of Bishop Lyth, Professor Punshon, Doctor Locking, Brother Smith,

and friend Elliott. *The Professor* gave a lecture on "The present state of Great Britain with reference to secular matters."

In addition to lectures and debates, the members of the "Menticultural" undertook the publication of a periodical to be entitled *The Hull Quarterly Magazine*. It will readily be believed that it did not extend beyond a few numbers. They also encouraged one another in writing poetry, and cherished the design, realized a year or two later, of publishing a volume of their joint contributions.

It was on his sixteenth birthday that he wrote to his cousin, with injunctions to secrecy, that it sometimes entered his mind that his destination was the ministry. His convictions on this subject increased in strength and definiteness, and were probably fostered by friends who discerned his gifts, and the direction that his thoughts were taking. His friend John Lyth had become a local preacher, and that fact, by reason of their close intimacy, helped to keep the subject before his mind. Another letter to his cousin narrates the circumstances under which he preached his first sermon:—

"HULL, August 5th, 1840.

"On Sunday last at seven a.m. I went to our band, and we had a very profitable time. At ten o'clock I went to see them at the school, and about half-past ten J. Lyth came in, and he and I started for Ellerby, where he had to preach twice. Having only one sermon ready, the other was to be an extemporaneous effusion. We arrived; the congregation in the afternoon was twenty-four souls, and he preached his only sermon, from 'Behold the Lamb of God,' etc. In the evening we did not know what to do, so it was agreed that we should each deliver an address, and then hold a prayer-meeting. After having implored the presence and blessing of the Holy Spirit, we both mounted the pulpit. It had been arranged that I should speak for ten minutes, and then he should finish. I gave out, 'Come, sinners, to the gospel feast,' then prayed, then read

the lesson—a long chapter—then gave out, ‘The great archangel’s trump shall sound,’ and then announced my text, ‘And as Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled,’ etc. I got into the subject, and, with the help of God, spoke for between half and three-quarters of an hour, and left him nothing to do but conclude.”

On the evening of Sunday, August 2nd, 1840, being just sixteen years and two months old, William Morley Punshon preached his first sermon. It was one of those experiments which must be judged by its results. The freest of religious communities would scarcely approve of an order of boy-preachers, yet the very stiffest of such would do well to make it possible for the youth who has

“ . . . some naked thoughts that rove about,
And loudly knock to have their passage out,”

to exhort or “prophecy” somewhere within its borders. That young Punshon was being drawn from above as well as urged from within, cannot be doubted. After that first boyish sermon to the village people at Ellerby, others beside himself believed that he was called of God to preach the gospel.

But there was discipline in store for him. It would have been a positive calamity had he glided too smoothly into the new life which this first attempt disclosed. It is not to be wondered at that temptation and conflict followed this perhaps too easy beginning. Bodily suffering, severe searchings of heart, and another sore bereavement, came to protect him from being “exalted above measure.”

He writes to his cousin of “dark and gloomy thoughts, and of a slavish, tormenting fear of death.” He was tempted to think that Christ had not

accepted him. He was painfully conscious of the besetting sin of vanity, and bitterly upbraided himself with desire for display. His very desires after goodness were haunted by mistrust of his sincerity and dread of unworthy motives.

Then, in endeavouring to check and mortify the tendency to vanity, he found himself upon the shoals of other perils, real or imaginary, and was greatly tossed and troubled. He became involved in casuistry: "Is this and that sinful in itself, or only when carried to excess?" He has thoughts of being slovenly in dress, of absenting himself from chapel, of using "plain, nay vulgar language instead of that flowery style which was natural to him, to scribble no more—all in order to avoid opportunities of making a display."

In August 1840, a week or two after preaching at Ellerby, he left Hull for Sunderland, and passed from the office of the Messrs. Morley to that of Mr. Panton, an uncle by marriage on his father's side. A few months later his father died. He had disposed of his business early in the year. His health was broken, and his spirits depressed. After spending some time with his relatives in Hull, he went to Sunderland, his native place, where he died on the 9th of December, 1840.

William's orphanhood was now complete. He felt his loss very deeply, but his letters written about this time show a remarkable elevation of religious faith and feeling. To his cousin he writes "that after the first fit of anguish the predominant feelings of his heart were gratitude and praise. He takes comfort in thinking of his father and mother as,

he would fain believe, appointed by God to watch over him, and 'bear him up in their hands, lest he should dash his foot against a stone.'"

During the first year and a half of his residence in Sunderland it does not appear that he attempted to preach. His early effort at Ellerby remained a solitary effort, though by no means forgotten, or unrelated to what followed. But he threw himself eagerly into other kinds of Christian work, more suited perhaps to his age, and better fitted to prepare him for the future. He took an active part in the Sunday-school connected with the old Ironworks Chapel. He became a member of a Prayer-Leaders' Band under the superintendence of Mr. Anthony Newton, and assisted in holding prayer-meetings in some of the most dismal parts of the town, to which, on dark winter nights, the workers had literally to grope their way. He also established a "Menticultural Society" differing in some respects from that with which he was connected at Hull. The devotional element entered more directly into its organisation. On alternate Monday evenings the meetings were devoted to prayer and Christian communion. At least one member of that little society survives, an early and a lifelong friend of Morley Punshon, Mr. T. C. Squance, who says:—

"The papers which he read from time to time led those who heard them to form the highest expectations as to his future; while his spiritual experience indicated the strength of his desire to consecrate his powers to the highest ends."

The following extracts from his correspondence will show something of the occupations, the conflicts, and the progress of this period of his life:—

May 21st, 1841. "I have been taking myself to task concerning the intense depression of my spirits, and puzzling myself to discover its probable cause. I think it is constitutional, and may be classed with nervous diseases. While it holds me under its dominion it is hard indeed to bear. 'The heart knoweth its own bitterness,' and cannot explain it if it would. . . . F. has come to lodge with us, and, in consequence, I again sleep in the bed I formerly occupied. I did not get much rest the first night. My thoughts were wandering to the past, and recalling my father's death. I did not forget to contemplate the heaven to which he has ascended, and when thinking of the sighings of his spirit while on earth, I have fancied them collected together, and forming an atmosphere surrounding me his child."

June 1st, 1841. "I have just returned from the Sunday-school Anniversary Meeting. . . . R. Wharton astonished me beyond measure, and not only electrified but melted me to tears several times during his speech, Such a fervent breathing spirit of piety, such occasional flashes of real wit, such amazing eloquence! Oh! how I felt myself called upon to increased exertion in the cause of Christ, especially when Wharton, with his hands raised to heaven, expressed the overflowings of a heart surcharged with gratitude."

January 6th, 1842. "I never felt until Sabbath last the immense import of words that I have repeated over and over again, 'a living sacrifice.' What a picture does this give of a state of entire consecration, . . . and yet even to this state God *can* bring me. Lord, hasten the time. . . . We had indeed a delightful time at the Ironworks. It was a season long to be remembered. In the prayer-meeting that followed the service I felt the presence of God. . . . When breathing with fervency of spirit, 'Take my heart, but make it new,' I felt as it were the earnest within me that God would show me greater things than these.

"Did you ever feel, in the midst of a hallowed service, as it were a sweeping, a breath, which seemed to waft itself over the whole congregation, so that you could almost see its movement and hear its sound; and there has followed a sweet and holy stillness, 'the speechless awe that dares not move?' There was such a feeling in the school on Sunday morning. I felt its hallowing influence, and praised God."

TO MR. J. LYTH.

"March 18th, 1842.

"My thoughts on the subject of the ministry have at length, I think, come to a crisis; and I feel it to be my duty to call sinners to Christ. I think, if all be well, I shall apply for a 'note' after our missionary sermons on the 3rd of April. I think of Heb. ii. 2—4, 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation,' etc., and this is my outline:—

“Introduction : The design of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

“1. Nature and greatness of gospel salvation.

“2. Clearness of evidence on which it rests.

“3. Fearful consequences of neglecting it ; and application, pressing the great question, ‘How shall we escape?’

“You must pray for me that I may have help from on high to enable me to keep all improper motives in the background.

“I have at last established a Menticultural Society in Sunderland, which consists at present of five members. They are C. H. Potts (P), William Perks (P), Wm. Morley Punshon, R. R. Fitzgerald, and Thos. C. Squance. Those marked P are preachers, and the others are likely to be, please God. I commenced with my lecture on the ‘Evidences of Christianity.’ Potts delivered a sermon on ‘It is appointed unto men once to die ;’ Fitzgerald on the Fall of Man, and on Monday night Squance lectures on ‘Missions.’ My next is ‘Religion and its Tributaries,’ proving the accordance of religion and science. On April 3rd I hope (D.V.) to hear Dr. Beaumont in the morning, and George Steward at night—the two most splendid preachers in the Connexion.”

The Superintendent Minister of the Sunderland Circuit at that time was the Rev. Thos. H. Squance, whose name is honourably connected with the first Methodist Missions to the East. He was one of the seven missionaries who sailed for India in 1813 in company with Dr. Coke. The latter, as is well known, died suddenly during the voyage, and the young missionaries were left to begin their work without their veteran leader. After labouring in India for nine years, Mr. Squance was compelled, by the state of his health, to return to England, and the remainder of his long life was spent in the home ministry. He was a wise, faithful, kindly pastor, and took a warm interest in young Punshon’s welfare. From him, as his Superintendent, it would be necessary to procure a “note,” as the old phrase was, authorising him to preach at such and such places within the circuit. This was the usual course prior to becoming a recognised local preacher, and

afforded a preliminary test of fitness. Mr. Squance readily furnished the required "note." This earliest credential of his ministry was highly prized by its possessor, and carefully preserved to the last. It runs as follows :—

"SUNDERLAND, *March 26th*, 1842.

"The bearer, W. M. Punshon, is hereby authorised to preach at the following times and places :—

April 3rd	.	.	.	.	.	Southwick.
„ 17th	.	.	.	.	.	Deptford.
May 1st	.	.	.	.	.	Ironworks.
„ 22nd	.	.	.	.	.	Hylton.
June 12th	.	.	.	.	.	Burleigh Street.
July 3rd	.	.	.	.	.	Ballast Hills.
T. H. SQUANCE."						

April 4th he writes :—"Yesterday I ventured to stand up and declare the unsearchable riches of Christ. You know that it has long been a subject of my thoughts and prayers. Many of my perhaps too partial friends discovered my call before I found it out myself. I have had frequent intimations from Mr. Squance to the same effect, and on Wednesday week Mr. Allen met me in the street, and told me in so many words that I ought to preach. These things decided me, and in dependence upon God I ventured. But oh the struggle for purity of motive, for singleness of eye! Who is sufficient for these things? Pray for me. Pray that every high thought may be humbled, that every vain imagination may be cast down. Pray that in my ministrations my Master only may be seen."

August 16th, 1842. "I have been lately very much depressed in spirit, 'cast down, but not destroyed,' but in the midst of my depression I have felt the power of Christ to save. I preached at the Ironworks on Sunday afternoon, and felt my soul blessed. While recommending religion to others, I felt determined to secure more of it myself. At our prayer-meeting in the Assembly Garth at night we had an especial refreshing. I do not remember ever attending a place where I was so much blessed. There were Kempster, C. Smith, Wm. Perks, Fitzgerald, T. C. Squance, and myself, and after the meeting we woke the echoes in Ryhope Lane with our hymns, for which exploit I was punished by my old friend the tic. . . . Mr. Steward, I am glad to say, remains at Newcastle. I hope to have more opportunities of hearing his thoughts that breathe and words that burn.

August 28th, 1842. (*Written from Glasgow.*) "The social principle is

strong within me, and I owe a deep debt of gratitude to the Providence which has thrown my lot in the midst of associates whose influence is for the most part benign and hallowed, and is exerted to lead me in the way of truth. . . . We were too late for the churches this morning, so went into the Catholic chapel. This afternoon we went to St. Jude's Church, where I had the pleasure of hearing Henry Melvill of London, who gave us a most splendid sermon, delivered in a Methodist style. This evening I found my way to the Methodist chapel, where I heard a good plain sermon on the paschal blood. I felt that blood was precious to me.

"I have thought much of late on the responsibility of the work of the ministry. I called on Mr. Allen the other day, and he asked if I was preparing for the May District Meeting. I name this because I want you to join me in prayer that in this matter I may be guided. My own opinion is that my health is not sufficiently good."

December 17th, 1842. "As regards preaching, I have plenty of work, and plenty of fame, so that were my motives worldly I should be satisfied. But I am not. I want the success which I have always regarded as the true and only criterion of the ministerial call. I preached in the town a fortnight ago, and had a crowded chapel, and felt considerable liberty while speaking from 'Behold he prayeth.' I was shocked to hear that one who heard me on Sunday night died on Monday, being drowned in the river. Oh! how faithful we should be, declaring constantly the whole counsel of God."

From the foregoing extracts it will be seen with what steadiness the current of his life was setting towards the work of the ministry. The interest which he felt in politics, though not extinct, was now altogether subordinate. A passion for preaching, to which his natural gifts and religious aspirations alike contributed, had become the master-passion of his soul. Along with the delight that attends the exercise of oratoric powers, there came a deeper insight into the great realities of sin and redemption, and a graver, more chastened estimate of the office and work of the minister of Christ. It was well indeed that misgivings, and conflicts, and inward humiliation were given in this precocious

spring-time, when perhaps the one thing to be feared was a too swift and easy blossoming. The difficulties involved in the preparation and delivery of sermons, which are in themselves a discipline for most young preachers, hardly existed for him. He sermonised with ease; divisions, paragraphs, sentences took shape as fast as his flying pen could fix them. There was no laborious committing to memory,—that was accomplished in the act of composing. What he wrote he could recall, page after page, with perfect accuracy and freedom; while his delivery, rapid, rushing, yet subtly modulated, charmed the ear, and strangely touched the emotions. These were great gifts—gifts rather than acquirements. What many men by slow degrees, through continued effort, in some measure come to possess, was his he knew not how. Little more than a boy, he began to preach, and at once found himself famous. The people flocked to hear him. The chapels were crowded. He was pressed to preach at Doncaster, and seventeen hundred people filled Priory Place Chapel. Invitations poured in upon him from the towns and villages near Sunderland, and from Hull. He entered at once upon the honours and upon the perils of a popular preacher. And surely none would lightly estimate those perils in the case of one so young as William Morley Punshon, whose temperament—affectionate, impressionable, ever craving sympathy, and susceptible to pain and pleasure at the hands of others—would naturally expose him to all the dangers of the position. But the safeguards were forthcoming. As has been said, they consisted, in part, of the inner spiritual disci-

pline by which it pleased God to chasten him, and, in part at least, the wholesome, practical work of the prayer-meeting, the Sunday-school, the mission band, served to keep him in touch with homely people and humble ways, and maintain the balance of things as against the exciting influences of popular services and admiring crowds.

By a special grace of God, his conscience had been awakened to the evil of vanity, and to the presence of something in himself that was either that, or the root and beginning of it. He took the warning, and fought this enemy down to its lurking-places. The victory was given him with such completeness, that few ever knew of the danger, and of the way it had been overcome. On this defeated vice the opposing virtue was established with such happy mastery that, through his after career, of all the tributes he received from friends, and particularly from his brethren in the ministry, the most frequent was that which was rendered to his humility. It was a common saying that nothing was more wonderful in Punshon than his modesty.

His early friendship with Richard Ridgill continued undiminished during the years that followed his removal from Doncaster. Poetry and politics formed the principal topics of correspondence between them. But Ridgill was surprised, and not altogether pleased, at the direction things were taking with his friend. In a letter written long afterwards, he says :

"I remember, as it were but yesterday, how, when we were pacing up and down Prospect Street, Hull, he told me he had begun to preach. I listened with amazement, and something like contempt, for, Wesleyan though I was, my heart was not then as his heart, and I thought him a fool."

In the summer of 1841 they spent some time together at Sunderland. Ridgill was then intending to seek his fortunes in New Zealand, and if he looked with little sympathy on his friend's purpose of entering the ministry, the latter just as little approved his notion of emigrating. He endeavoured more than once to dissuade him from it, and wrote:—

“Are you going to prosecute this whim of yours? Is New Zealand still precious in your sight, or has reason reasserted its supremacy? I need not say that I sincerely hope such is the case.”

Early in the year 1842 Ridgill left England, not, however, for New Zealand, but for South Africa. The friends parted at Sunderland in August 1840. Their next meeting-place was City Road Chapel, London, in the August of 1880.

Soon after reaching South Africa, Ridgill was converted, and almost immediately entered upon missionary work, thus passing into the ministry before his friend Punshon. The last had become first. William was filled with joy on hearing of this, and wrote to his cousin:—

“I want you to praise God with me. Richard Ridgill has felt the power of the gospel, and is now engaged as a missionary, preaching in the regions beyond the unsearchable riches of Christ. ‘What hath God wrought!’ How strangely and beautifully do all things work together for good! We were loud in deprecating his departure from England. But the Lord had need of him.”

Although Mr. Squance wished to propose Morley Punshon as a candidate for the ministry at the March Quarterly Meeting of 1843, he felt unable to consent to this. He wanted more time for self-examination, for preparation, and for prayer. It was

finally arranged that he should give up his situation in Sunderland, and spend a few months with his uncle Clough, then stationed at Woolwich, that he might be directed in his studies, and otherwise assisted in preparing to become a candidate for the ministry in the spring of the following year.

Before leaving Sunderland one of his early ambitions was gratified. A tiny volume, entitled *Wild Flowers, or a Selection of Original Poetry*, was published under the editorship of John Lyth, then just entering on the work of the ministry, to which he contributed seventeen pieces. They had been composed at intervals during the three previous years, so that some are very youthful productions indeed. It is not necessary to submit them to serious criticism. They show, not so much direct poetical impressions, as the influence upon a warm and lively fancy of the poetry that he had read. Their chief interest at this distance is biographic. They illustrate some events in his history, and show the kind of topics that interested him, and furnished themes for his early efforts in verse. Perhaps the truest note of feeling is uttered in the poem entitled "Lines on the Anniversary of a Mother's Death," and in the verses, recalling Cowper's lines, in which he mourns his loss :—

" But thou art gone ! and I am left
A heritage of tears ;
My mourning soul, too soon bereft,
Thy smile no longer cheers ;
And bitterly the thought intrudes,
As through the world I roam,—
Its cities are but solitudes,
For I have lost my home.

“ Why didst thou die, my mother ? why
 Deprive me of my guide ?
 Oh ! oft with aching heart I sigh
 And grieve that thou hast died ;
 For, what with frowning skies above,
 And struggling fears within,
 I’m sure I need a mother’s love
 To woo my soul from sin.

“ But, mother, thou art happier far !
 Thou standest near the Throne,
 And I must wage my spirit’s war,
 And brave the world alone ;
 Then oh ! let thy pure spirit be
 For ever hov’ring near,
 And in all trials whisper me,—
 ‘ Thy mother watches here.’ ”

In a short poem with the title “ ’Tis good for us to weep,” are the following verses, among the best written in his boyish years :—

“ The weak and wayward heart
 To earth so closely clings,
 That heaven, *in mercy*, deigns to part
 Us from our lovely things :
 So, when our joys are slain
 Beneath the angel’s sword,
 Our bleeding hearts repent, and pain
 Reminds us of the Lord.

“ God hath marked out our way ;
 But when the sunbeams shine,
 Too oft our willing feet would stray
 Earth’s fading flowers to twine ;
 And when to leave the track
 Our hearts would widely roam,
 He sends a storm to drive us back
 To Him, and heaven, and home.”

Two poems, entitled “ Mary Stuart ” and “ Holyrood,” are chivalrous vindications of the Queen of Scots.

The most vigorous stanza of the former is the following:—

“ Ill-fated Queen ! the world can trace
In thee the fortunes of thy race,
The sorrows of thy line ;
The grief that storms without control—
The anguish of a Stuart’s soul—
A Stuart’s death—were thine.”

The writing of verse long continued to be a recreation, but, as his true calling grew upon him, and took completer possession of his life, it occupied an entirely subordinate position, and, while affording pleasure from time to time to himself and to his friends, never really came into competition with his more serious labours.

CHAPTER III.

1843—1849.

WOOLWICH—RICHMOND—MARDEN—WHITEHAVEN—
CARLISLE. *Aged 19 to 25.*

Resides with Rev. B. Clough, at Woolwich.—A Candidate for the Ministry.—Richmond College.—A Painful Misunderstanding.—Sent to Marden.—Appointed to the Whitehaven Circuit.—Removes to Carlisle.—Letter to R. Ridgill.

In August 1843 he left Sunderland for Woolwich, and entered upon a course of theological study under the direction of Mr. Clough. Although full of heart and hope with respect to his work, it was not without a painful effort that he parted from his friends and relations in the north. The three years he had spent in Sunderland had been momentous ones. The events by which they had been marked included his father's death, and the consequent break-up of his home, the great quickening of his spiritual life, and the rise and growth of the conviction that he must become a minister of Christ.

To his friend Lyth he writes :—

“ *Woolwich, August 28th, 1843.*—I have now got somewhat settled in this neighbourhood. I like the face of the country very much, but Methodism is not northern Methodism. It may be more enlightened, but it has less feeling, and less power. I have preached both in Deptford

and Woolwich chapels, and suppose I shall have to go to Greenwich soon, where, in a morning, they read prayers. Let us not forget to pray for each other, my friend. If health and circumstances favour, I am now fixed for the work of the ministry. Yesterday I was on board the *Persia*, which is going to take Barnabas Shaw out to Africa again. I could not help wishing I were going too. Oh for more of the spirit of Christ ! ”

To his cousin he writes of “ a lamentable and fearful depression ” that had seized upon him. He could neither study nor make sermons. “ If this should last there would be nothing for it but to give up all thought of the ministry.” A few days later the cloud has lifted. He felt at once the comfort of the Lord, and rebuke for his despondency. On the Sunday evening he had preached in Spital-fields Chapel. It was crowded in every corner ; not less than two thousand five hundred persons present. About five hundred remained to the prayer-meeting, and there was reason to think that some souls were truly penitent.

He had at first a stout Yorkshire prejudice against the liturgy, and could hardly bring himself to read the form of Morning Prayer to which so many of the congregations in London and the neighbourhood were accustomed. After reading prayers at Limehouse, he admits he may, in time, be able to profit by them. As for his recurring fits of depression, he determines to shut his eyes to difficulties until he shall have strength to do the braver thing,—look them in the face, and conquer them in the name of the Lord.

He found much comfort in reading a short memoir of a Mr. T. M. Haswell, that had just appeared. It pleased him to notice the resemblance between his

own circumstances and those of the subject of the memoir; a local preacher, about to seek admission to the ministry, just his own age, popular, of poetic tastes and tendencies, and, above all, one who had to struggle against the same temptations as beset himself—self-complacency and desire for fame. He longs to overcome these dangers as successfully as Haswell did. His aversion to pride of heart is made deeper and more settled.

To one of his cousins he describes a service at Blackheath, where he had much blessing in spite of unsavoury surroundings :—

“ We are compelled to worship in a stable, fitted up as well as circumstances will allow ; but it is a most wretched place. The walls are damp, and when the place is crowded, it is almost unbearable. Underneath the only window, at one end of the room, is a pig-stye, which effectually prevents us from opening the window ; and, moreover, such is the spirit of persecution in the place, that the owner of the stye occasionally rakes up the filth thereof for the purpose of annoying.”

He spent the first week of the new year in the Romford Circuit, to supply the place of a minister who was sick. In eight days he preached eleven times, met sundry classes, and walked forty miles. “ So I think I have been tolerably worked.”

As the time drew near when he must be formally proposed at the Circuit Quarterly Meeting as a candidate for the ministry, he passed through fresh searchings of heart. He felt unworthy to be a minister of Christ. He dreaded lest when he should wear the garb, and speak the language, and engage professionally in the service of religion, he should lose its inner life and spirit.

In due course he passed the ordeal to which he had looked forward with mingled hope and fear.

Proposed by the Superintendent Minister, and accepted by vote of the members of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting, according to the unvarying rule of the Methodist Church, William Morley Punshon had passed the first of the gates that guard the approach to the Methodist ministry. Through the subsequent steps and stages he passed successfully, and early in September 1844 he entered the Theological Institution at Richmond.

Among the fifty-six candidates who were examined together in July 1844 were several who afterwards rose to distinction in the Methodist Ministry. Of these may be named Thomas M'Cullagh, President of the Conference in 1883; J. D. Geden, for twenty-five years Classical Tutor at Didsbury College, and member of the Old Testament Revision Company; Samuel Coley, a preacher of altogether exceptional originality and beauty, who occupied for a few years the chair of Theology at Headingley College, and died, all too soon as it appeared, in 1880; and Benjamin Hellier, for twenty years Classical Tutor, and subsequently Governor of Headingley College.

By Mr. M'Cullagh's kindness, his recollections of this examination are quoted here:—

“When the roll was called, a young man of twenty, evidently keen of eye, and with curly locks, answered to the name of William Morley Punshon. . . . I do not recollect that we spoke to one another during the days we stood face to face at City Road. After our appointment to circuits by the Conference of the following year—he to Whitehaven and I to Workington—we very early formed the friendship which has stood the strain of thirty-six years. After meeting in Cumberland, one of our earliest conversations was on the incidents of the July examination. We agreed that a few of the Committee were unnecessarily severe with some of the candidates. With the President, John Scott, there was nothing to complain of; but Dr. Bunting, ‘behind the throne, and greater

than the throne,' who possessed a giant's power, used it like a giant; at least, so thought some of the examinees. Young Punshon fared better before the July Committee than some of his brother candidates; but he told me that at the close of his examination at the May District Meeting he was rather worried by the number of questioners. Having afterwards to read some verses from the Bible, that the meeting might judge of the way in which he read the lessons in public worship, he created a smile by the passage which, without design, fell to his lot: 'How are they increased that trouble me! Many are they that rise up against me,' etc.

Mr. Arthur, referring to the July examination, says:—

"He was remarkable rather for the precocious reputation which whispered of his coming celebrity, than for anything that the examination evoked. He was modest, collected, and clear."

The following are extracts from letters written during this period:—

"You will have heard that I passed the Quarterly Meeting, and thus far my way has been made plain. I meet with every encouragement from those who are around me, and I need it, for there are most formidable discouragements within myself. . . .

"I believe God is daily fitting me for the work by giving me to see my unfitness for it. It is when I have nothing that I most abound. I was never, I think, so deeply convinced of my own unworthiness as a few Sundays ago, when preaching the funeral sermon of one of our deceased members. The text was Psalm lxxiii. 25, 26, 'Whom have I in heaven but Thee?'—chosen by herself on her deathbed. The spacious chapel was completely packed. Not an aisle could be seen, and the gallery stairs were crowded from top to bottom. When I entered the pulpit I was completely overpowered, . . . but the Lord was with me, and I was enabled to preach with freedom and power. . . . I never felt more thoroughly humbled than when before that vast assembly."

On entering the College at Richmond he threw himself heartily into his studies. The Rev. Thomas Jackson was Theological Tutor, and the Rev. John Farrar Classical Tutor. Mr. Jackson has left in his *Recollections of my own Life and Times* (pp. 322—328) an interesting outline of his course of theological

lectures. Both he and Mr. Farrar were painstaking and competent teachers, and men of the highest character, then and for long years afterwards—to the beautiful old age which each was allowed to attain—held in great love and reverence throughout the Methodist Connexion.

His notes of college lectures are very full, and written with characteristic neatness. The theological lectures are thirty-one in number, and include the doctrine of the Trinity, the Person of Christ, and the Creation and Fall of Man. In addition to these there are copious notes of a short course of lectures on natural philosophy, delivered by Mr. Farrar. A series of extracts from Puritan Divines, and particularly from John Goodwin, shows Mr. Jackson's influence over his theological reading. But his life at Richmond came to a sudden and unexpected termination. After four short months of residence he left the College to return to it no more. At this distance of time it may be allowed, without attributing blame to any one, to express regret that such a proceeding was possible in the case of a student of much promise and of unblemished character. Taken in connection with the short and often interrupted course of his early education, it was peculiarly unfortunate that just as he was falling in with the conditions of college life and study, the order of things should be once more dislocated, and he himself transferred from the lecture-room and library to the duties and responsibilities of the ministry. It may, perhaps, be urged, not without plausibility, that the same Providence that had cast him to such an extent, even as a boy, upon

his own mental instincts and appetites, was once again setting aside arrangements which, for most men immeasurably the best, were not the best for him.

The reason for his leaving the Institution must now be stated. Shortly after entering the College he found that he had been entered as a missionary student, and that he was there at the charges of the Missionary Society, which, in turn, would have a claim upon him to proceed, in course of time, to a foreign station. To this he did not feel prepared to consent, while his relatives were strongly opposed to it. After some negotiation the Missionary Society abandoned its claim to his services, and as it was considered that there were quite as many men in training for the home ministry as would be required, any necessity for his remaining longer at the College seemed to those in authority no longer to exist. Considering that he was immediately sent to supply a vacancy in the home ministry, and was forthwith caught in the whirl of its engagements, it is a little difficult to follow the reasoning pursued. But it is needless to discuss the matter. His account of it shall be given without further comment :—

TO THE REV. J. LYTH.

“MAIDSTONE, *February 6th*, 1845.

“Your letter addressed to Richmond has been forwarded to me here. . . . *I have left the Institution.* Now just summon all your inventive powers to try and find out the reason. As you will not be able to guess, I will reveal it at once. I filled up my schedule with a *general offer* without consulting my friends, and on my entrance at Richmond I found I was regarded exclusively as a missionary student. Of course, as in duty bound, I made it known to my friends, and they objected to let me go abroad. This was notified to the authorities; and, after many long and painful discussions, it was resolved (and how could it be otherwise?) that

I could not any longer be continued as a missionary student . . . and as they had quite their number of home students, they had no room for me there. So here I am, on the 'list of reserve.' I cannot blame myself, except for want of explicitness at the London examination. I did then express my preference for the home work, but it seems they did not understand it. However, 'good out of this seeming ill' will be eduved for the candidates of future years, for they have discovered that there was a lack of explicitness on both sides; and at future examinations the men are to be distinctly 'told for what service they are intended.'"

On leaving the Theological Institution, Mr. Punshon's name was placed on the "list of reserve." Under this term, well understood by Methodist ministers, are included ministerial candidates of various classes who have as yet received no regular appointment from the Conference, and are at the disposal of the President for meeting emergencies and supplying vacancies in the ranks of the ministry. He had not long to wait for employment. A case of an exceptional kind had arisen in the village of Marden, in the Maidstone circuit, of which Mr. Clough was the Superintendent. Owing to ritualistic, or, as the term was forty years ago, "Puseyite" practices, a number of persons who had been accustomed to worship at the parish church withdrew from it, and requested that a Methodist minister might be sent to them. In answer to this request Mr. Punshon was sent to Marden, to do his best in a somewhat delicate position. On his way thither he writes to his cousin:—

"MAIDSTONE, *February 5th*, 1845.

"You heard of the secession from the Church at Marden in Kent. The friends have handsomely come forward *to pay my board* if I will reside amongst them and be their minister. I have acceded to the proposal, so that I am now *incumbent of Marden!* It will be connected with the Maidstone circuit, and I shall change with the Maidstone preachers, which will make the work considerably easier. . . . There are, of course, dis-

advantages. There are no Methodists in the place, and I shall have to try, under God, to *make* some.

"Of course this is no Connexional arrangement. I am still on the list of reserve, and it does not at all guarantee my 'coming out' any sooner. But it will be capital drill for the ranks, and I hope by God's blessing it will be beneficial both to me and the people among whom I labour."

The hope expressed in the last sentence was happily realized. The agitation and unsettlement of mind caused by his removal from college subsided. To the delight of preaching was now added the interest of pastoral work. He gave his afternoons to visiting, and found that a minister has other means of usefulness to the souls of his people than those belonging to the pulpit. And what was good for them was no less serviceable to him. No man needs the discipline of pastoral work more than the popular preacher. Tendencies to the unreal, the artificial, the high-flying, are best checked and qualified by intercourse with the sick and sorrowful, by experience of practical ministering amid the varied conditions of actual everyday life. The months spent at Marden were happy and useful ones. His preaching attracted large congregations. By some of his "parishioners," as he called them, he was strongly urged to seek orders in the Church of England, with the assurance that a church should be built for him. But neither then nor at any later period did he falter for a moment in his allegiance to Methodism. It cost him no effort to decline the kind proposal. He set himself rather, as he had playfully said, "to *make* some Methodists." A Society was organised, a chapel built, and when the time came for him to leave the Kentish village where he had served his short apprenticeship to the ministry, a probation before the probation which had its formal

beginning at the Conference of 1845, he could look back with thankfulness on good work done and useful lessons learnt.

In the Minutes of the Conference of 1845 the name of W. M. Punshon occurs for the first time. It stands under the head of "Preachers now received on trial," together with the names of Thomas M'Cullagh, George Mather, and Ebenezer Jenkins, almost the only survivors of the men of that year. Although his exceptional pulpit popularity was now becoming widely known, he was not appointed to one of the more important or exacting circuits. There is, indeed, something amounting almost to a tradition in Methodism, that distinguished men spend the earlier years of their ministry in obscure places. After a while the great centres claim their services and afford them more adequate sphere for their powers; but scores of instances might be adduced to show that "country circuits" have been the training-ground of the men who have afterwards risen to honour and authority.

A certain shrewd—not to say shrewish—critic of men and things a generation ago named Whitehaven as the kind of circuit to which high officials and other pampered personages might be sent with advantage for the subduing of their pride. To Whitehaven Mr. Punshon was appointed, assuredly not for this purpose, but possibly with the notion on the part of those in authority that hard work, scanty remuneration, and the obscurity of the Cumberland dales would be peculiarly good for a young man of poetic and rhetorical tendencies, and precocious popularity. This was all fair enough, and, as has

been said, quite in accord with precedent. At this time Whitehaven was a circuit with two ministers and about three hundred members, and included a dozen or more country places on the coast and among the hills. For a young preacher there was plenty of fresh air and exercise, and abundant opportunity for hard work amongst a sturdy, intelligent people, farmers and miners, seafaring men and thrifty townsfolk.

At the very beginning of his work at Whitehaven, the "thorn in the flesh" from which he suffered again and again through all his earlier years made itself painfully felt. Various physical distresses, together with extreme nervous depression, brought him very low, and seemed to deliver him up to the darkest fears and imaginings. While his preaching astonished and delighted the congregations that flocked from every side to hear him, he seemed to himself to be losing the favour of God and the goodwill of men. He put himself under medical treatment; he was galvanized, but hardly knew whether body or mind ailed most. His letters to his faithful, sister-like cousins are very touching in their disclosure of pain and despondency, the inner side of a life whose outward course was one of unclouded popularity and favour. That his recurring depression had its roots in a constitutional malady is undoubted, and in this he came to find a sort of satisfaction; while in its higher and spiritual aspects he learned to accept it as chastisement for his profit, and to turn it to good account in the balance of his joys and sorrows.

Having said this much, it is not necessary to quote

in detail his descriptions of his depressed state of mind. An example or two will suffice:—

TO HIS COUSIN.

“WHITEHAVEN, *September 11th*, 1845.

“You may well ask what is the matter, and I can hardly tell, only that I am ill and unhappy. . . . I should not at all wonder if a month sees the end of my ministerial life. All my old Hull feelings—do you remember them?—aggravated into intense force by the pressure of disease—for the same strange malady yet haunts me—have returned upon me. . . . The harrowing suspicion has come across me that my brain was going. I am almost convinced that I shall have to leave the ministry.”

TO THE REV. J. LYTH.

“WHITEHAVEN, *September 17th*, 1845.

“You may have perhaps heard that I have been ill. . . . I am still anything but well, and my only consolation is my work. A nervous melancholy has taken possession of me which at times oppresses me grievously.

“This is a hard circuit; our shortest distance is nearly five miles, and our longest about fifteen, and we have no conveyance but our vile bodies. Our financial matters are at the *ultima thule*, but we hope against hope to rise.

“You would see in the *Watchman* the opening of our Marden Chapel. It is a glorious thing, if well managed. I have no doubt of the people's steadfastness, but all will depend upon the preacher now appointed. The first year wins or loses the battle. I have done something, or rather, God has done something by me, for the Connexion, and I shall look back upon the period of my residence in Marden, and thank God that I have not lived in vain.”

TO HIS COUSIN.

“WHITEHAVEN, *September 25th*, 1845.

“I write this morning to let you know that I am better in spirit and prospect, although not much improved in health. . . . So far as I know my own heart, I have an ardent desire to belong to Christ, to forsake all sin, and to be made useful to those around me.

“I was much encouraged on Sunday evening, preaching at Harrington, a small seaport about five miles distant. We had a very lively prayer-meeting, and it is the first I have seen for a long time. One poor backslider was in great distress.

“My Superintendent is a very nervous invalid, who has had a paralytic stroke, and is threatened with another, so that the circuit is but poorly

furnished in its ministers. Oh that God may choose the weak things to confound the wisdom of the wise ! ”

TO HIS COUSIN.

“WHITEHAVEN, *April 2nd*, 1846.

“I have promised not to engage myself to any other circuit than this for the next year until after the June quarter-day. I went to the meeting on Monday with a negative prepared, and I stated it pretty plainly ; but the invitation was not only unanimous, but given with such warmth and affection that it compelled me to pause. It will be a terribly up-hill year for me if I do stay, because I shall have to begin it without a single sermon.

“The good work continues. We have had some souls gathered in nearly every Sunday night. Our numbers show an increase of twenty-five, and thirteen on trial. The Lord be praised for this small measure of prosperity.

“Poor Wayte ! You would perhaps see the death of a young missionary in Sierra Leone. He was with me in the Institution,—a most devoted little fellow, offered himself specially for that murderous clime, and was only there three weeks when death completed his sacrifice.”

Although the note of depression frequently reappears in his letters, it was not observable in his public work and general intercourse with his people. In these, by a swift and happy re-action from gloom and distressful questionings, he found deliverance from the adversary, and was full of fervour and enthusiasm, or bright with a genial, sunny playfulness that had a great charm for those around him.

Mr. M'Cullagh's recollections of this period will be read with interest :—

“It was my happiness to hear Mr. Punshon's first missionary speech. It was delivered at Harrington, a quaint little seaport, then in the Whitehaven circuit. As I was the ‘stranger’ from Workington, he urged me, as ‘the deputation,’ to make ‘the collection speech.’ I was suffering from hoarseness, and so I resolutely refused. As I listened to his oration, for such it was, I felt very thankful for my hoarseness, for I do not think I could have spoken after such a speech. I was prepared for something good, as accounts reached Workington almost daily of the wonderful young preacher who had come to Whitehaven. . . . But when

I heard for myself, I found that the half had not been told me. The rush of brilliant thoughts and burning words, the perfect whirlwind of eloquence, almost took away my breath. I do not know that I was more enraptured with his speeches at Exeter Hall in after years, than with that first platform effort during the first few weeks of his ministry. We used to call it his 'Excitement Speech,' as he dwelt in it upon the excitements of novelty, opposition, and success, by which the missionary enterprise had been supported in turns, until at last it came to rest upon principle. I no longer wondered that such an orator succeeded in filling the large, half-empty chapel at Whitehaven with admiring hearers before his first month in the circuit was over.

"In the May of 1846 he attended his first District Meeting at Carlisle. He and I lodged together at a village two miles from the city, and as we had to preach on successive mornings at five o'clock, an early start was necessary. We arranged between us that he was to remain awake all night in order to waken me, as I had to preach the first morning. I promised to do the same for him the next night; but, alas! the willing spirit was overmatched by the weak flesh, and the watchman overslept himself. Finding ourselves considerably behind time, in order to recover some of it we ran the whole of the two miles. Arrived at the chapel, we found the Rev. Samuel Rowe giving out a hymn from his pew. Mr. Punshon entered the pulpit, and preached a remarkably beautiful and eloquent sermon. After the service I breakfasted with some of the ministers at the house of Mr. James. The preacher of the morning not being present, much of the conversation at the breakfast-table turned on the sermon, wonderful from any one, but especially from a probationer in his first year."

Soon after returning from Carlisle he writes to his cousin:—

"WHITEHAVEN, May 25th, 1846.

"I am completely exhausted this morning. Thank God it was worth my labour. Two were made to rejoice last night, and there were three others in distress. There was a magnificent congregation.

"I imagine Carlisle will be my next year's abiding-place (mind, this is yet a secret). I was there this week at the District Meeting. I have had invitations from Hexham, Gainsborough, and Sevenoaks. I hope the Lord will direct me. I wish to be in all things guided by Him. I am going to reprint *Wild Flowers*."

In the summer of this year he and his friend M'Cullagh went together to Keswick to speak at a meeting. They took the opportunity to make a short

tour through the Lake District. It was a time of intense enjoyment to them both, as, in addition to many other bonds of brotherliness, they were one in their love of nature, and susceptibility to poetic influences. They went on pilgrimage to Greta Hall, so long the residence of Southey, then but three years dead. Mr. M'Cullagh noticed a characteristic of his companion's mind that was undoubtedly an abiding one,—that “human sympathies, social instincts, and admiration of genius” were more quick and sensitive with him than the feeling for nature, although the latter was by no means dull and undiscerning. He says:—

“The poetical associations of the district invested the landscapes with additional attractions to him. He remembered that we were in the region of the Lake Poets as well as at the Lakes. In *Lays of Hope*, published soon after this visit, are some lines on ‘Lowdore,’ in which the author says more in praise of Southey than of the waterfall. . . . In speaking of the Scottish lochs, he told me that in sailing down Loch Katrine, in order to enjoy it with intenser relish, he read *The Lady of the Lake* all the time.

“After rambling on the shores of Derwentwater, and visiting the waterfall, we returned to Keswick, and had a glorious meeting. The Whitehaven minister spoke in his usual style, and so excited were myself and the late Robert Haworth, who was then stationed at Keswick, that neither of us was able to go to sleep the livelong night, but we chatted until morning.”

The sermon preached in Carlisle at five o'clock on a May morning was memorable for something more than the run of two miles that preceded, or the immediate impression made upon those who heard it. The Methodists of Carlisle set their hearts upon securing Mr. Punshon for their circuit when he should leave Whitehaven, and, as appears from the hint given to his cousin, they at once informed him

of their desire. Accordingly, on completing his second year at Whitehaven, he was appointed to Carlisle, and removed thither at the beginning of September 1847.

Almost immediately afterwards he wrote at considerable length to his old friend Ridgill, then completing his four years' probation as a missionary in South Africa, and about to be married. He congratulates him warmly upon his approaching happiness, and, after the manner of the boyish and romantic days whose memory was so dear to both, finds prose too tame a medium for his thoughts, and utters them in verse.

He, too, has a deep, pure happiness in which he would have his friend rejoice with him. He has won the love of the most amiable, intelligent, and pious of maidens, and cannot thank God sufficiently that after long hoping and waiting he is now engaged to Maria, daughter of Mr. Vickers of Gateshead.

"And now, as to myself. My prevailing feeling is a deep and painful consciousness of unworthiness, pressing upon me at times so as to be almost intolerable. . . . The hue of earthliness is upon my actions, my distrust is so dishonourable, my love so languid, my worldliness so intense, that I hardly dare believe I am a child of God. . . . My position is a perilous one. I am generally popular, the breath of indiscreet praise wafts so oft across my soul, that I am in danger of thinking more highly of myself than I ought to think, and it has struck me that God keeps me humble by scant prosperity in my own soul. When the acclamations by which I have been greeted, and the attachment I have inspired, would have elated me beyond measure, I have sadly breathed, as I contemplated the sinfulness within, 'Ah! if they knew my heart!' and the thought has been a stern schoolmaster to drive me to Christ. Oh! my brother, it is a hard matter to keep always humbly at the feet of Jesus. The bribe of talent, of applause, and, above all, because most like an angel of God, the bribe of usefulness, are very dangerous, and can only be withstood by vigilant, unceasing prayer. . . .

"When I last wrote you I was in Whitehaven, and, I think, had just

entered upon my second year. I was unanimously invited to remain a third year in the circuit, but it seemed to me that my work there was done. I could number about sixty who ascribed their conversion, under God, to my instrumentality. I had invitations from Hexham, Bishop Auckland, and Workington, but my predilections were in favour of Carlisle. Still, I did not wish to choose my appointment, so I accepted none. Here I am, however, by appointment of Conference, and if the powers that be are ordained of God, and He blessed all their proceedings,—which I somewhat doubt, seeing the unjustifiable means sometimes resorted to in order to secure good circuits, etc.,—I may suppose it is providential.

“I am now in my study, in sight of the fine old cathedral whose ‘merrie chime’ gives it a sympathy with humanity, and makes one feel as though the mighty mass had a knowledge of mortal joy and woe, and concealed within its majestic bosom a heart of flesh and blood. To the right is the time-honoured Castle that has stood some seven sieges, and in the time of border feuds was the defence of the English frontier. There is the old dungeon in which Fergus MacIvor was confined, and Gallows Hill, where he expiated with his life his mad devotion to the Stuarts. The view from the Castle rampart is exceedingly beautiful. A vast extent of fertile country stretches in rich landscape before you, through which the Eden meanders, its glossy waters reflecting the sunbeams that delight to wanton with the silvery stream. Our cause is low, having been rent by the demon of division. Our labour is almost confined to the city. The country places are very miserable. With the exception of ‘Warwick’ there is not one worth mention, and our sanctuaries are either cramped dwelling-houses where we are ‘cribbed, cabined, and confined,’ or schoolrooms ranging in dignity between a hen-house and a stable, somewhat too orderly for the one, scarcely so respectable as the other. ‘Warwick’ derives its importance principally from Warwick Hall, the lady of which, Mrs. Parker, is a member of the Society. I dined with her on Sabbath last in company with her brother, James Heald, M.P., one of the two Methodists who have been drafted into Parliament by the last election. Our chapel in Carlisle is good, and our congregations increasing. I hope, upon the whole, there is prospect of blessing. I have an active Superintendent (the Rev. Edward Sumner), who is also Chairman of the District; which I esteem an advantage, tending as it does to initiate me in District business, and I trust ‘the beauty of the Lord will be upon us,’ and that the year on which we are entering will be marked by much saving power. . . .

“The last has been a somewhat stormy Conference. The case of Caughey, the American Revivalist, has created a great deal of discussion. Many of our people are displeased with the stoppage put upon his labours by the Conference. Others—amongst them, myself—deem them right in

the thing, but grievously wrong in the manner. Be that as it may, many heart-burnings have been created which time alone can allay, if they be allayed at all. . . . Considerable excitement has been caused by the publication of certain 'Fly-sheets' reflecting on the proceedings and governmental acts of Dr. Bunting and his party, written in a bad spirit, and containing extremely vile imputations of motives, yet containing withal much deep and telling truth. The 'Fly-sheets' were condemned by a vote of Conference, unanimous except Dr. Beaumont and S. Dunn. A resolution was then moved that the preachers should sign a Declaration expressive of their abhorrence, and disavowing all connection with the authorship. Then came the tug of war. They debated five or six hours upon it; principal speakers *for* the Declaration, Wm. Vevers, George Osborn, John Scott, Dr. Bunting; *against it*, A. E. Farrar, A. Bell, J. Fowler, S. Dunn, Dr. Beaumont. At last it was carried by a show of hands so nearly equal that the President hesitated for some moments to pronounce the decision. It was consequently sent round. Many, I suppose, have refused to sign,—I, with my usual obstinacy, amongst the rest.

"Just before Conference, I was down at Marden, preaching their anniversary sermons. The cause is prospering nicely. They have now about twenty-five members, and are likely, I hope, to be established. I reflect upon that part of my life with almost unmixed satisfaction chastened still by the remembrance of my own unworthiness. . . .

"I am still a monomaniac in autograph gathering, upon which I bestow a relaxing thought sometimes when my bow is unstrung.

"You would hardly, before leaving England, hear of George Steward, one of the most eloquent of our preachers. His grasp of mind is immense, and I should think it no exaggeration to say he is equal to Watson in power, and superior in his perception of the beauty of truth. He is not popular. His preaching is too ethereal, and his delivery unpleasant, but the intelligent of his congregation esteem him very highly.

"We have had warm work in defending ourselves from the attacks of *The Christian Witness*, a publication edited by Dr. Campbell, which has opened a furious cannonade against our polity. Vevers and John H. James, the latter especially, have written well in our defence. The Evangelical Alliance, I fear, will be productive of but little good while this demon of party remains unexorcised.

"The late election has been a very strange one; memorable for the return of Lord Ashley at Bath, and defeat of Roebuck; for the rejection of Macaulay at Edinburgh, and the drafting into the House of such men as F. O'Connor, George Thompson, W. J. Fox, and others, and for the complete fusion of parties. We shall see what the ensuing session brings forth. The general opinion is that the Parliament will be a short one. Lord John Russell, after all, is the most candid and consistent statesman in the bunch. I hope the country will give him a fair trial.

"What have you read lately? I am making Wesley's 'Christian Library' my staple reading for this year. There are some fine massive truths in the old divines. The very dust of their thoughts is gold dust. I have not a very large library as yet, but it is large enough for a young man.

"I have to go to Brampton to preach missionary sermons on Sunday, and address a missionary meeting on Monday. I wish you would just come over as an unexpected deputation! Do you get the 'Notices' out yonder? If so, have you seen a letter from Edward J. Robinson from Ceylon? He is one of the most gifted fellows the Society has ever sent out, but very eccentric. He and I passed together at the London District Meeting.

"Adieu, my dear Richard. Let us live near to God, preach the truth in its simplicity and power, and many shall be the crown of our rejoicing in the day of God."

The reference to Wesley's *Christian Library* as furnishing his staple reading may, perhaps, need explanation. It consists of a vast series of extracts, in the original edition extending to fifty volumes, selected by Wesley from the best theological writers in the English language, with translations of early Christian writers, and of moderns like Pascal and Arndt. It includes what were, in his judgment, the most valuable writings of Anglican divines like Hall, Taylor, Leighton, Beveridge, and John Smith; and of such Puritans as Owen and Goodwin, Sibbes and Manton, Baxter and Howe. This library of practical divinity, prepared for the use of the early Methodists generally, and of the preachers in particular, is one of many proofs that Wesley's ideals both in doctrine and devotion were sober and conservative. The energy with which he pursued his evangelistic labours was not greater than that with which he strove to give the spiritual life of his people adequate nourishment and discipline. The first few generations of Methodist preachers were, to a large

extent, "brought up" on the *Christian Library*, to which their great leader did not fail to direct their attention with such exhortations and reproofs as seemed necessary. But its value relatively diminished as time went on. The biblical and theological writings of Adam Clarke and Richard Watson possessed a fresher and more immediate interest for the younger men. Moreover, the growing abundance and cheapness of religious literature, and the charm of contemporary thought and writing as compared with the ancient, threw this stout array of divines more and more into the rear,—which, in such cases, means the remoter shelves of libraries and the recesses of second-hand book shops. Here and there a young minister was found courageous enough to face the course of study followed by his fathers, and read Divinity under John Wesley's guidance,—for the most part greatly to his advantage. Mr. Punshon was one of these. It furnished a kind of reading well fitted to qualify and supplement his characteristic tendencies. These carried him, as is apparent through his whole life, towards poetry, eloquence, and human affairs; and with his enormous and ever-increasing facility of utterance, it was well for him to serve apprenticeship in private to the grave masters of Anglican and Puritan orthodoxy.

For the rest, his letter to Mr. Ridgill shows him happy in his work and in his engagement with Miss Vickers; not altogether delivered from the depression and morbid self-reproach which in earlier years had often filled his soul with gloom, but evidently less and less exposed to their influence as his life widened out

in energetic and successful work, and his heart was soothed by the loving sympathy of one who was to be his wife ; strongly interested in Methodist affairs, in the leading men and public measures of the Church in which he was rapidly becoming known ; and still, as in his boyish days, taking pleasure in observing and discussing the ways of Parliament.

The popularity to which he alludes had now fairly assumed the character, though not yet the dimensions, that it was to retain for so many years. To the old chapel in Fisher Street streamed crowds of eager hearers, and all the calm proprieties of the staid cathedral city were stirred to their very depths. The recognised classifications of orthodox and heterodox, Church people and Nonconformists, professional men and tradespeople, were confounded in this new order of things. Persons found themselves side by side in the Methodist chapel who had never been in one before, who had never met one another there or elsewhere. Anglican clergymen, Dissenting ministers, Roman Catholics and Quakers, gentlefolks from the city and squires from the country, lawyers and doctors, shopkeepers, farmers, and labourers, with here and there an itinerant actor,—all sorts and conditions of men to be found in or near the old Border capital, flocked to hear the young preacher, and to be excited, subdued, moved by a pulpit oratory unlike anything they had ever heard. It was not subtlety or originality of thought, or novelty of doctrine, that drew the crowds and held them in breathless, often almost painful, suspense. In respect of doctrine it was Methodist preaching as generally understood, and there was little sign of

new or deeper insight into familiar truth ; but there was a glow, a sweep, an exulting rush of quick-following sentences, exuberant in style,—too much so, a critic might say,—that culminated now and again in passages of overwhelming declamation, or sank to a tender pathos that brought tears to unaccustomed eyes. His whole soul was in his work. The ornate, musical sentences, full of harmonious delights for the ear, were no mere literary devices ; they were his natural mode of expression, raised and quickened by the emotions of the preacher's heart. His voice, often harsh and husky at first, would clear and strengthen as he proceeded, revealing unexpected range and power of modulation. His constrained, uneasy attitude grew free and graceful ; he stood erect ; the left arm held behind him, with his right hand, instinct with nervous life, he seemed to grasp his audience, to summon and dismiss arguments, to cut his way through difficulties, until, with uplifted face, radiant with spiritual light, both hands were outstretched in impassioned climax, or raised as in contemplation of some glory seen from afar.

Meanwhile, the crowded congregation was borne along with him. Commonplace, unimaginative people, and susceptible youths and maidens, the refined and reserved, and dull honest peasants, good old saints and careless sinners,—all alike came under the spell of his pulpit power. To not a few his ministry at this time was the means of conversion and newness of life ; to very many it brought help and nourishment, stimulus and strength ; while to multitudes it was the disclosure of unimagined

beauty and impressiveness in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, with what results the day will declare.

Even to the little handfuls of country people in the villages he gave of his best. There was no need at that time to husband his strength or economise his resources. Those were happy days of youthful freshness and vigour; and chapel, barn, or farmer's kitchen,—it was all one to him, if there were souls to preach to. In one country place in the circuit, the people met in the single room of a cottage, where, for lack of space, some had to sit upon the four-post bed which stood in the corner. It is still remembered how, on one occasion, an uncouth rustic came thither, and sat with eyes and mouth wide open in astonishment, listening and staring, until, unable longer to contain himself, he gave utterance, in the very middle of an eloquent passage, to a long emphatic “Coo-o-sh!” of wonder and amazement.

In July 1849 his period of residence at Carlisle came to a close, and with it the customary term of ministerial probation. To use official language, “he had travelled four years,” and the time had arrived for being admitted into full connection with the Conference. His ordination and his marriage, both eagerly anticipated, were now near at hand; and full of gratitude for the past, and of bright hopes for the future, he appeared at the Conference which assembled in Manchester on the 25th of July.

CHAPTER IV.

1849—1855.

NEWCASTLE, SHEFFIELD. *Aged 25 to 31.*

The Manchester Conference.—Ordination.—Marriage.—Appointed to Newcastle.—“The Agitation.”—Recollections by Mr. Arthur and Dr. Parker.—Removes to Sheffield.—Family Life and Circuit Work.—First Appearance at Exeter Hall.—*The Prophet of Horeb*.—Growing Popularity.

THE Conference of 1849 is memorable in the annals of Methodism. The agitation and uneasiness that had prevailed throughout the Connexion for some time past called for prompt and reassuring action. The particular plague that needed to be stayed was that of anonymous pamphleteering, in which all reasonable limits of free criticism were passed, and the bitterest personal slanders were sown broadcast. With a connexional polity like that of Methodism, and with the discipline of mutual inquiry and oversight which, from the beginning, Methodist ministers have exercised among themselves, it was inevitable that the Conference should use whatever authority it possessed to discover and reprimand the authors of an unworthy and mischievous agitation. It will be remembered that at an earlier stage of the matter Mr. Punshon had spoken of the anonymous

pamphlets as "written in a bad spirit, and containing extremely vile imputations of motives, and yet containing much deep and telling truth." As the agitation progressed, and his acquaintance with its real meaning increased, he modified the latter part of this opinion, and was confirmed in the former. In the unhappy conflicts that shook the Connexion for some five following years, and in which the loss of 100,000 members was sustained, he bore his part with full conviction that in opposing the ill-omened "reform" he was contending for the interests of truth, of freedom, and of religion. But that was yet in the future. A probationer on the eve of ordination, it was not for him to do more than listen to Conference debates, to watch the course of events, and to form such judgments of the men engaged and the issues involved as he was able.

The Rev. Thomas Jackson, Theological Tutor during his brief residence at Richmond College, was elected President, and the Rev. John Hannah, Theological Tutor at Didsbury College, Secretary. During the sessions of the Conference Mr. Punshon and his friend M'Cullagh sat side by side in a front pew of the gallery in Oldham Street Chapel, second only to City Road Chapel in its historic associations,—associations that have now no local habitation to cling to, but which will be preserved, it may be hoped, in fitting chronicles, and in Manchester tradition, for generations to come. Mr. M'Cullagh writes:—

"From our coigne of vantage we watched with intense interest the proceedings of Conference. We heard the two speeches of Thomas Jackson, one after his election to the chair, the other in introducing the question of 'Character,'—both delivered with solemn earnestness, and foreboding the disciplinary measures which followed, and have made

that Conference memorable. We witnessed the exciting scene when James Everett appeared at the bar, and was questioned with regard to his connection with the 'Fly-sheets,' and we heard the sentence of expulsion. . . . Mr. Punshon was much struck with the debating power of the Conference, and, notwithstanding his own special oratorical gifts he greatly coveted this peculiar kind of ability, in which, however, he never attained the same excellence as that to which he attained in the prepared deliverances of the pulpit and the platform."

Among the young ministers completing their probation at this Conference were no less than five who in after years rose to the position of President; viz., William M. Punshon, Thomas M'Cullagh, J. H. Rigg, Ebenezer Jenkins, and Richard Roberts. At the public examination, when it is customary for the men about to be ordained to give some account of their call to the ministry, Mr. Punshon spoke calmly and modestly :—

'He felt that next to his conversion to God, his ordination was the most important crisis of his life. Remembering the way in which he had been led, and the unmerited mercies he had enjoyed, that he had been made a child of God through faith in Christ, and called to the sacred work of the ministry, he felt overwhelmed with gratitude. He was the child of pious parents, and was instructed in the fear of God and taught to reverence His ministers and read His Word. He scarcely remembered the time when he was not the subject of religious impressions. The first conviction of which he had distinct remembrance was produced when he was about nine years of age by a sermon from the Rev. W. H. Taylor, but it was not until his fourteenth year that the voice came by which he was really awakened to seek the Lord. It came from his mother's grave. . . .

'During the years of his probation he had laboured under much discouragement and depression, but God had upheld, and both humbled and gladdened him by giving him seals to his ministry. His conviction was unfaltering and constant that he was where God would have him be. He felt also that he was called to labour in the ranks of the Wesleyan Ministry. His love for Methodism was not merely hereditary, it was the result of enlightened and sincere conviction. He knew not where he could find greener pastures or stiller waters, and while he trusted he should always cherish fraternal feelings towards all the children of God, here was his home.'

The ordination took place in Irwell-Street Chapel, the charge being delivered by Dr. Newton.

Mr. Punshon left Manchester a few days after his ordination. He had made the acquaintance of the assembly of which he was soon to become a distinguished member. He had begun to understand it and to love it, to gain an insight into its spirit and modes of procedure, and to revere the great principles which it embodied and maintained. Attracted and impressed by various types of intellectual and spiritual power, he listened with delight to the preaching of Mr. Steward and the speeches of Mr. Osborn. To each of these, in his respective sphere, he assigned the palm of superiority over all others. He himself was appointed to preach on a Sunday afternoon at Ebenezer Chapel, Redbank. A considerable number of ministers came to hear him, and he preached a powerful sermon from John x. 10, "I am come that they might have life," etc. Before the Conference closed he was appointed to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, a circuit having four ministers and about sixteen hundred members. He was the youngest of the four, and his colleagues were William Burt, William Pemberton, and William Andrews.

His four years of probation for the ministry and his two years' engagement to Miss Vickers were completed at the same time. His ordination was the seal of the former, and his marriage almost immediately afterwards brought the latter to its happy conclusion. Like himself, Maria Vickers was the child of Christian parents, and had been trained in a devout Methodist home. She is described by those who knew her as of a sweet and lively disposition,

and possessing an almost exuberant flow of spirits. She had a marked capacity for friendship, and from childhood was noted for her strong attachments and for the constancy with which she held to her friends. She was in full sympathy with the aims of a minister's life, and well fitted by character, training, and personal experience of religion to be a true helper to her husband. From the home of her parents in Gateshead to her new home in Newcastle she had but to cross the Tyne, and with every promise of happiness that heart could wish, amid the prayers and blessings of their many friends, she became the wife of William Morley Punshon. They were married at the Wesleyan Chapel, Gateshead, on the 22nd August, 1849.

Newcastle was a very different sphere of labour from those in which Mr. Punshon's lot had hitherto been cast. Whitehaven and Carlisle were not to be named in comparison with the capital of north-east England for population, wealth, and industrial enterprise. The swarming populations of Tyne-side, rugged, strong-willed, warm-hearted, might well move to its depths the heart of a young minister. There is, indeed, no more vigorous, capable humanity on English ground—capable of good or evil, of brutal wickedness or high-strung, manly religion. From its earliest days Methodism has fastened upon this region with a strong grasp. Second only to London and Bristol in the honours of Methodist history, Newcastle has been the scene of some of its most characteristic successes. From John Wesley's day to the present time Methodism in Newcastle has maintained an earnest and effective witness for Christ, and been the means of turning multitudes "from dark-

ness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.' The Tyne-siders are by no means unsusceptible of the charms of eloquent utterance, but they are perhaps less inclined than most people to be put off with mere words. They want to know what a man means as well as to hear what he says, and are disposed to weigh and judge his thought whatever be the charm of his style. If some doubted whether the preacher who had drawn crowded congregations at Whitehaven and Carlisle would succeed among the "canny" Newcastle folk, the doubt was not unnatural. Moreover, Newcastle had knowledge of the best preachers Methodism had produced. The tradition of good preaching was well established. The standard of comparison was high. And besides the native shrewdness, sure to detect what was showy and nothing more, there were ancient men and women in the congregations well experienced in Christian doctrine, who would give little thanks to a preacher, though he spoke with the tongues of men and of angels, unless he preached the gospel in its fulness and depth.

Mr. Punshon was not unconscious of what was involved in his appointment to Newcastle. His apprenticeship was over. The privileges attaching to precocity had expired by lapse of time. From a promising youth he had become a man, to be tested and judged by the standards that are applied to men. Great expectations had been raised, and must be met; great opportunities opened out before him, and he must rise to their height, or make conspicuous failure.

He entered upon his work with unfeigned humility,

but without fear, sustained by his trust in God, and the sympathy of his true-hearted wife.

As a preacher he took possession at once of the wider sphere that Newcastle afforded. His popularity was immediate and unbroken. The Methodist Societies were, however, sorely disturbed by the agitation that followed the disciplinary action of the Conference; and, as often happens at such times, base elements from outside were drawn in, and the world's worst manners increased and embittered the controversies of the Church. His friend M'Cullagh was stationed in the Shotley Bridge Circuit, only fourteen miles away, running a course akin to his own in usefulness and honour; and by correspondence and personal intercourse they strengthened one another for the duty of those difficult times. Mr. M'Cullagh says:—

“He wrote saying, ‘Are you quiet in Shotley? We have a good deal of agitation here, but unless Everett comes in person I think it will soon subside.’ Matters, however, grew worse, and after a time he wrote to say, ‘I have had my first public hissing.’ This treatment he received from a mob which waylaid the Leaders’ Meeting at Brunswick Chapel, to express disapprobation of some act of discipline which had been exercised. Mr. Pemberton, afraid to face the mob, clambered over the walls of back yards to make good his escape to his own house. This good man soon after fell into ill-health and died. His death, it was thought, was hastened by the anxieties and annoyances to which he had been subjected. His colleague, Punshon, easily rose superior to the difficulties of the position. The tide of his pulpit popularity, moreover, swept all opposition before it. However some might condemn the action of the Conference, the people were irresistibly drawn to hear this young Apollos, this ‘eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures.’ Many came from other circuits to hear him. At Hexham, twenty miles up the Tyne, there were some who ran down frequently to Newcastle for the purpose.”

It is not intended here to refer in any controversial spirit to what was once well known to Methodists as

"the Agitation." It has passed into history,—it might almost be said, ancient history. Its ashes are cold, and if any one desired to kindle them anew, he would find it impossible to do so. Such mention as it receives here arises solely from the fact that Mr. Punshon was, of necessity, caught within its toils, and that it cannot therefore be wholly omitted from the story of his life. In a letter addressed to a friend at Carlisle, he discussed the matter at considerable length, and, as will be seen, with much vigour of criticism and general effectiveness. A meeting had been held by "Reformers" in Carlisle, at which Methodists were urged to "stop the supplies," that is to say, withhold their pecuniary support from the ministry and the institutions of Methodism.

"But fifteen years have elapsed, my friend, as you painfully know, since the Carlisle Wesleyan Society was rent in pieces on the very points that are now disputed. No new feature has been introduced into the controversy. Ministerial assumption, reckless expenditure, tyrannical conduct of the Conference,—these were the charges dinned into your ears *usque ad nauseam* in the unhallowed strifes of 1835. 'Stop the supplies' was as unsparingly recommended then as now. Nay, some of the minor actors in the former drama again strut upon the stage, having learned nothing by experience, and are anxious to be constitution-mongers still. . . .

"I was somewhat surprised, I confess, to find the name of the chairman. But, though gifted by Providence with social position, and endowments which might have qualified him for honourable and lasting usefulness, he is a true child of Reuben,—'unstable as water, he shall not excel.' . . . He appears to have become proficient only in certain parts of grammar; to wit, the *indefinite* article, the *future* tense, and the *infinite* mood. Certain parties *to be* called upon for subscriptions; certain districts *to be* visited; certain improvements in Sabbath school management *to be* made; and they remain *in futuro* to the end of the chapter. His verbs all signify to be, and to suffer, but never *to do*. I was somewhat surprised to find that for nearly a whole twelvemonth he had remained a Reformer; but he who has been 'everything by turns and nothing long' cannot all at once be transformed, and I do not despair of

hearing by-and-bye that he has convened a meeting in favour of the Divine right of kings. Seriously, it is matter of lamentation that a gentleman generally intelligent should surrender his better judgment for the equivocal honour of a back seat in the cave of Adullam."

After commenting upon the speech of the gentleman who moved the first resolution, he continues thus:—

"To crown all, he brings a charge of impiety against nearly every Christian Church. The Establishment, Congregationalist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Catholic, all are included in his tremendous anathema. Methodism is under his special malediction, and even his pet 'Association' has some pretty little 'Reverends' of its own. What must the poor man do? The Scotch Baptist Church seems to be the only place of refuge. But even here he cannot be accommodated, for that quiet community are in the habit of minding their own business, and his genius would have no scope amongst them. Alas for him! He is the orphan of Christendom, and must stand in his glory a spiritual Ishmael, 'his hand against every man's, and every man's hand against him.' . . . I was almost disposed to pass the next resolution unnoticed, when I saw the mover's name. 'It's only M——,' rose to my lips, and I was nearly decided. It is said that when members of the House of Commons arrive just as a division is about to take place, and there is no time for them to acquaint themselves with the merits of the matter in hand, they are accustomed to inquire on which side a certain gallant colonel has ranged himself, and they immediately vote on the opposite, assured that they will not be far wrong. The illustration bears upon the present case. Dissatisfied alike with the Methodists and the Association, at war with everything and everybody, known as the horse-fly of the Society for years, blessed with a conscience that might supply all the boarding-schools in the city with indiarubber for a twelve-month, inventing a story about the scholars being supplied with a liberal allowance of port wine and other delicacies, in order to damage the Kingswood Collection, he is the very man to do the dirty work from which his more respectable compeers shrink, and move the resolution about stopping the supplies.

"Mr. J. H—— seconded the resolution. I fear, I greatly fear, the Conference must give up. They can stand out no longer. Mr. J. H—— has withdrawn his support. Mr. J. H—— has gone over to the enemy. And who is Mr. J. H——? A youth escaped from the nursery! And he, as if determined to out-herod Herod, accused the Conference of duplicity, and, borrowing wholesale and verbatim from an older rebel in the *Wesleyan Times*, modestly compared himself with Wesley, Knox, Luther, and Jesus Christ. So true is it that which hath been shall be, and still, as in

Robert Hall's day, 'mice'—nay micelings—will nibble at the wings of archangels."

Throughout this letter, of which less than the half has been quoted, mingled indignation and humour have free course. There is at least as much fun as fury in it, and there can be little doubt that it was written with a keen relish of the task. But controversy, grave or gay, was not his chief employment. Even in stormy times, "man," for the most part, "goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening," and through this period of agitation Methodist preachers went the round of their circuits, preached in town and country, met classes, visited the sick, and ministered "each in the order of his course," Punshon among the rest. He soon began to feel at home in what he called "our princely Brunswick chapel," and rejoiced in some success. He had at once great influence with the young people, his genial friendly ways co-operating with his great popularity to draw them round him.

One of these writes in after years :—

"I first knew Mr. Punshon in Newcastle-on-Tyne, when, immediately after his marriage, he came to that circuit. He never knew what power for good he had over some who were young people then. His preaching and example led to decision for Christ, at a time when the world on one side and religion on the other were seeking their allegiance. Some of them hope to tell him in a better world, what they never did fully here,—how much they owe him. For some time he held a weekly Bible class at a ladies' school. How the girls looked forward to those Monday mornings! Much of the instruction there received has been foundation truth, laid strong and deep.

"I well remember the first time I heard Mr. Punshon preach in Brunswick Chapel. His *vivid* manner of giving out the hymns arrested attention, and I was wonderfully interested in the sermon (rather a novelty for me then!) as he described, from the words, 'Behold he prayeth,' a Christian's course from beginning to end.

"His appearance was quite juvenile, his hair thick, waved, and curling, his figure spare and muscular, while his keen blue eye seemed to take in every one in the chapel.

"Soon he preached again, on a Fast-day appointed, I believe, on account of the cholera. His text was, 'It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting,' a discourse which was considered a masterly one, and was much spoken of. His enunciation, though clear and distinct, was very rapid, and yet his words seemed to come too slowly for his thoughts. The next sermon I distinctly remember was from the text, 'There shall be no night there.' It stirred my heart to its depths. I saw a new power and beauty in heavenly things, and was led to contemplate seriously the Divine and the Eternal. I resolved as I lay awake during the night not to be shut out of that heaven into which one appeared to have really looked.

"I was soon privileged to make the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Punshon, and I count their friendship one of the greatest treasures of my life. Their kindness to me, a school-girl, I shall never forget. Both liked to gather young people about them. They knew we were attracted to them, and they used this power, as occasion served, to win us to their Master. An evening at their house was a great joy. After some round game such as 'Proverbs,' or 'Capping verses,' at which both Mr. and Mrs. Punshon excelled, the crowning treat would be given when he repeated piece after piece of poetry,—grave, gay, pathetic, his store seemed to have no end. Never did we hear from him a word unbecoming his profession. His influence reached to the mental, moral, and spiritual part of one's nature, and it was all good.

"He was singularly free from unkind or uncharitable remarks. He always seemed to see the best side of every one, and by his silence would condemn any approach to censoriousness. Yet who could enjoy a joke more keenly, or see the ridiculous more quickly than he?"

For the first two years of their residence in Newcastle, Mr. and Mrs. Punshon lived in lodgings. During their third year they rejoiced in a house "all to themselves,"—a very small one, and by no means sumptuously furnished; but the new joy of house-mastership was keenly realized, and he would show his friends over the modest dwelling with much pride and delight. His letters afford a few glimpses of his happy home-life.

TO REV. T. M'CULLAGH.

"September 7th, 1849.

"This comes to open our epistolary campaign after the long vacation, during which so much of blessing has come to us both. I have made numberless inquiries after your whereabouts, in order that I might offer my congratulations among the hosts of friends who encompass you with good wishes and prayers. I will venture to say none are sincerer. I trust that the intimate friendship which has subsisted so long between us, and which I have learnt to consider almost as one of the necessities of my life, will be rather cemented than otherwise by our new relations."

To another friend he apologises for delay in answering her letter, and gives a list of the excuses he might offer:—

"The care of the Churches, the duties of the household, making speeches, providing ways and means, filling up schedules, buying bacon, taking journeys, 'beside that which cometh upon me daily,' the loving with increasing attachment my own dear home, and its still dearer inhabitant. . . My wife tells me that I am pretty well; various impertinent people insinuate that I am getting stout, and even my Bishop the other day was prophesying that I should become a 'round preacher.' Be this as it may, I fancy either matrimony or the Newcastle air, perhaps a spice of both, has hitherto agreed with me passing well. My work is much more laborious, and scarcely so well repaid as in Carlisle, and but for the destructive and painful agitation, I should like my circuit well. Our congregations are very good all through the circuit, and our members, though there is a great leaven of dissatisfaction, manage to cleave to us, some of them rather closer than we like!

"I don't know whether I intimated before that I was thinking of getting thin, of setting up a cry about persecution, and of trying to become a martyr on a small scale. What think you of my plan? If I came to Carlisle, do you think I could get up a tea-meeting, with a collection afterwards for the 'THIN MINISTER'S MARTYR-FUND?'

"The most comfortable sort of thing would be to have an annuity settled on me, that by the generosity of a kind people I might again become fat and flourishing."

In December 1850 he rejoiced in the birth of a daughter, Fanny Morley. The father-heart awoke within him, and his letters brim over alternately with deep and serious feeling, and buoyant delight

in his new treasure. The tidings were sent at once to his friend M'Cullagh, "God blessed me with a daughter about an hour ago!" A few weeks later :—

"Fanny Morley has already composed several essays on the marvellous properties of fire-light, with two or three investigations into gas-light, a study in which she has begun to take deep interest. How thoughts, and hopes, and fears throng upon one as a father! The Lord hide our offspring under the shadow of His wing."

To a friend in Carlisle he adds :—

"Of her superlative ugliness, I need but tell you what everybody says,—the everybody in this case means three old ladies,—that *she's just like me*. I write this, in spite of my jesting, with a full and thankful heart."

Before the time came to leave Newcastle a son was born, "the heir of all the Punshons," as his father would call him when indulging in mock-heroics on the subject.

These were happy years in Morley Punshon's life. The craving for sympathy and affection was now satisfied. For the first time since his childhood he had a home. The love of wife and children had brought health to his spirit, and delivered him from the morbid conflicts and questionings of earlier days. His religious life was deepening, and his mental powers expanding. It was a time of growth, and of growth in kindly soil and genial weather. His popularity was well established, and though he cared more to be loved than to be admired, both were given to him in large measure. In the work of the pulpit and the platform he found a joy that amounted to rapture, while the longing amid it all to bring souls to Christ, tempered that joy with humility and seriousness. But though the circle of

his life and labours continually widened, the centre of his happiness was his home. As yet there was no shadow upon it, no sign or beginning of sorrows. Anxieties, sickness, bereavement,—these were below the horizon, and before many years were past would darken the sky ; but for the present all was bright. It was a morning without clouds ; the cheery sunshine rested upon the home, and filled the hearts of its inmates.

The following recollections of Mr. Punshon at this period of his ministry will be read with interest. The Rev. William Arthur says :—

“The first six years of his ministry were just closing before I heard him preach. Meantime his name had become widely known, and his merits were matter of frequent dispute. Some of his earliest writings I had seen, and they appeared to me to warrant the appreciation of the multitude rather than the depreciation of critics.

“It was in 1851, just when the Conference was assembling at Newcastle, that I went on a Sunday morning to hear Mr. Punshon, at Wesley Chapel, Leeds. The condition of the Connexion was anxious in the extreme ; I had been for four months suffering a compulsory silence, and had but a slight prospect of ever again being fit for a circuit. Thus, both in point of health and the influence of circumstances, I was predisposed to take cloudy views rather than sunny ones, and besides this, the general impression I had gathered from report led me to expect brilliancy indeed, but not much of true thinking or religious power. Never shall I forget how thankful I was in walking away that Sunday morning. I had found a man better than his reputation. The brilliancy and the popular attraction were indeed there, but of a quality and in a degree greatly exceeding what I expected, and underneath there was an amount of real thought, a true preacher's aim, and a depth of godly feeling such as report had by no means prepared me for.”

To these impressions received by Mr. Arthur when a minister of considerable experience and standing, we are able to add others made about the same time upon a younger man, himself just beginning

to preach, measuring men and things for himself, and particularly able to embody the result of his observations in language shrewd, humorous, and piquant. The following sketch is furnished by Dr. Parker of the City Temple:—

“I cannot have been more than nineteen years of age when I first saw Morley Punshon; yet I remember distinctly that when he was pointed out to me as ‘the rising orator’ of the Methodist pulpit, I failed to see the image and superscription of genius on his round, substantial, and inexpressive face. Poetry might somewhere lurk in the light curly brown hair, which clustered thickly around a somewhat stubborn-looking head, but nowhere else could I discern a trace of the fancy which works miracles in tone, and colour, and form.

“‘No,’ said I, ‘no; Morley Punshon may be that man’s name, but when that book was bound, the apocalypse was left out.’

“So much for my impressions of the burly young man who was sitting sideways towards me as he made a very hearty tea in a Methodist schoolroom, preparatory to a meeting that was to be held in the chapel overhead. My eye was still inquisitively fixed upon ‘the rising orator’ of Methodism, with the view of trying to read the meaning of his projecting eyebrows, and the singular motion made by his almost invisible eyes.

“Presently the chairman had said his civil nothing about the gentlemen who surrounded him, and one or two speakers had, with the full and hearty concurrence of the assembly, resumed the seats they ought never to have left. Then ‘the rising orator’ came to the front of the platform and laid both hands somewhat nervously upon the substantial rail. The voice?—yes, that will do: sharp, vibrant, dominating, quite a special voice; would be well heard on shipboard even in a high wind; a clanging voice, which escaped harshness by the occasional interspersions of tones liquid and musical.

“At this point my opinion formed in the tea-room had undergone considerable modification. At this long distance of time it seems to me that I had never heard so much about ‘gems’ and ‘diadems,’ ‘diamonds’ and ‘corals,’ ‘glowing seraphs’ beating their wings (I forget against what), ‘roseate dawns and westering suns.’ I had heard nothing quite like this before. It took my boyish fancy captive, and sent me back to all my poetry books with new zest.

“Fix the next point of time when I am twenty-one. Time, Sunday afternoon, three o’clock; place, a small Northumbrian village. The little chapel is crowded. Why? ‘Punshon is coming.’ That was reason

enough. It wanted but a minute or two to the hour announced for commencing : there he is ; hat in hand, eyes downcast, quick in step, and presently he is in the pulpit giving out the hymn beginning,

‘ Father of me and all mankind.’

He is much paler than before. After the prayer, which did not move me, he soon gave out his text, ‘ The Lord will bless His people with peace.’ Without a note to help him, away he went, every sentence polished, every paragraph complete, and the whole tone solemn, urgent, and resolute, but without a touch of pathos, or a trace of tears. It was like hearing good news spoken to one from the top of St. Paul’s Cathedral, the news being very good, but the distance being very great. Yet I had a new feeling towards the ardent preacher, for I saw that he was more than clever, and that his real purpose was to do good. He had of course his own way of doing it, and he kept steadily to it. He had no humour, no pathos, and even in private I often observed that the smile was in his eyes rather than on his lips. At the time to which I am referring his sermons were, like his voice, inspiring, rousing, and wakening like the blast of a trumpet. They were full of doctrine and of sound teaching, as remarkable for solidity as for beauty, set in a form of words that often dazzled and startled by their beauty and music.

“ Here my merely boyish impressions end, but I ask the editor’s permission to add that after the years of boyhood had passed I heard Dr. William Morley Punshon with inexpressible delight, marking how wonderfully he had grown in spiritual knowledge, and in that kind of expression which, though not lacking one element of the old beauty, was yet charged with the subtle inspiration that can be caught only in deep and prolonged communion with God. Morley Punshon is a name that I can never forget. It charmed me in my earliest years, it gratified me in my maturer days, and now as I take up his sermons and read them I can hear the orator hurling his sentences in the midst of the great congregations that gratefully respond to his pointed and noble appeals. Dr. Punshon was a poet-preacher. He saw poetry in everything, or saw everything through poetry. It is not for any one man to say, ‘ This is the right way,’ or ‘ That is the wrong way’ in preaching. Every preacher has his own way of working out his own ministry. When we come to recognise this fact we shall see that poets and reasoners, historians, expositors, declaimers, and men of supreme emotion, all constitute one grand ministry, which it pleases the Lord to recognise in its wholeness, and to bless alike in its parts and in its unity.”

On the last day of August 1852 he took leave of the Newcastle Society. A meeting was held, and he

was warmly thanked for his acceptable and useful labours. He said :—

“I never felt more thoroughly humbled than I do this evening. I came among you with my ordination vows fresh upon me, and I regard them as solemnly binding. How very far short have I fallen of what I purposed then ! I feel undeserving of the kind vote of thanks that has been passed this evening. A friend, however, remarked to me that it was not unanimous ! One person did not hold up her hand. That person knows me better than any one else in the chapel, and is fully aware of my painful consciousness of feebleness in my pulpit ministrations, and my great dissatisfaction and depression afterwards. I deeply mourn that my ministry has not been made more useful. Some over whom I had hoped to rejoice, are, I fear, yet in their sins. While preparing his sermons, how often is a minister ready to think ‘they will not be able to resist these arguments, they must be conquered by these appeals ;’ but again and again he has to learn that ‘old Adam is too strong for young Philip’ still. A note received last evening pleased me more than anything I have heard to-night. It is from a young man stating that his first religious impressions were produced under my ministry, that he has found the Saviour, and is now engaged in preaching the gospel. Some others I know of who have been led to the Saviour who are now in the far West, and others, I hope, are adorning the gospel at home.

“You have promised to remember me in what I most value, your prayers. I thank you all for the uniform kindness with which I have been treated, and I can truly say that I leave Newcastle without any feeling other than that of love towards every one with whom I have come in contact.”

Having completed his term of three years in Newcastle, according to the inexorable rule of the Methodist itinerancy Mr. Punshon must needs remove to another sphere of labour. He was appointed to the Sheffield-East Circuit, to reside at Thorncliffe, about seven miles from the town. The “agitation” so often referred to had left its traces on Sheffield Methodism in the shape of diminished numbers, embarrassed chapel-trusts, and financial burdens. The arrival of so popular a preacher and energetic a worker was a welcome reinforcement.

His first service in Norfolk Street Chapel, when he preached with great spiritual power from "Behold the Lamb of God," filled many a Christian soul with gratitude and hope. One thing only came between him and the perfect enjoyment of his work. His residence at Thorncliffe was not altogether congenial to him. He was away from the great population to which he felt strongly drawn, and which was the natural sphere for a ministry like his. The absence of railway communication, or, indeed, of any public conveyance except a kind of coach which ran to Sheffield on market days, was a serious inconvenience to one who could not but be moving hither and thither continually. Urgent requests for special pulpit and platform service poured in upon him, and his journeyings multiplied. At the end of a year he was removed to Sheffield, an arrangement agreeable to himself and advantageous to his work.

After a week's residence in his new home he writes :—

"On the whole we are comfortably off. The house is somewhat antiquated and tumbledown, but well furnished, with a pleasant garden and a kind neighbour. My work is not burdensome, and the prospect appears rather encouraging. I have been agreeably disappointed in the aspect of the congregations. They are both more numerous and more lively than I anticipated.

"I have made many resolutions of fuller devotedness and consecration. On Sunday evening I met the finest class, without exception, that I ever met in my life, a class of thirty-six members, all young men. Their experience was delightful, and led me to augur well for the Methodism of the future in Sheffield."

TO THE REV. T. M'CULLAGH.

"September 9th, 1852.

"From my own ingle-nook, the parlour of a tumbledown old house, venerable from its antiquity, snug from its cottage-likeness, pleasant from its rurality, remarkable for the combination of its styles of architecture,

inconvenient because of low roofs and unexpected steps in strange places, and yet charming because it is one's own,—I write to assure your Macship that I am still your affectionate friend and brother.

"This certainly is a new style of life for me, never to see a 'bus' or hear the shriek of a whistle from one week's end to another. I doubt not that by-and-bye I shall become so countryfied that, like the old gentlemen farmers, I shall show that I am a lord of the soil by carrying a pound or two of it, by way of sample, on my boots and breeches.

"I am expecting, however, that it will be a sphere of usefulness; not the less so, perhaps, because my antediluvian distance from railways will check my vagrancies, and because my predilections were in favour of any place but this.

"I am pastor of three country places, Thorncliffe, Ecclesfield, and High Green, at two of which I preach every week, and at the third once a fortnight. This is all my week-day work; on Sundays I change regularly with the others. So that you see, apart from my rustication, my disadvantages are not very great.

"You will see that I am on the deputation for Norwich. Do you think the collections will pay the expenses?

"I wonder who compiles the Minutes? You will see that Henry B. Cox is said to have retired for want of health. You know he died three years ago. If you turn to p. 152 you will find that Timothy C. Ingle and Ralph Keeling—who both died last year—are *particularly* requested to attend a meeting of the Education Committee to be held in Kirkgate Chapel, Bradford, next July. Why not invite John Wesley? I should think he would be more likely to accept than either Ralph or Timothy."

A few months later he renewed his correspondence with Mr. Ridgill, who was still labouring in Southern Africa:—

"THORNCLIFFE, NEAR SHEFFIELD, *January 5th, 1853.*

"... I am now in my eighth year of itinerancy, and have laboured successively in Whitehaven, Carlisle, and Newcastle-on-Tyne. . . . I have been led in a way that I knew not. Lovingkindness has followed me all the days of my life. I can see the good hand of God in many of the most bewildering and painful events of my history; and just as when the sun has set the stars come out in their placid beauty and 'Darkness shows us worlds of light we never saw by day,' so, in the darkness of depression, public slander, and personal suffering, I have learnt more lessons for good, and been more braced up for earnest work, than by aught or all beside. My personal piety is not what it ought to be, never altogether clear of apprehension and of alloy, but I am striving for the

mastery over self and sin, and yearning for larger measures of the life of God. I am sometimes tempted to think that a high state of comfort in religion is withheld from me that in the counsel of my Master I may be kept humble at His feet. I have much to guard against, both in the pressure of a partial, though undeserved, popularity, and in the danger there is of lapsing into a professional piety, and losing its vitality and power. I am thankful, however, for present desires and aims, and, more than all, for the blessing of Heaven owning my labours in the conversion of sinners.

“You are aware *in the general* of the storm we have had to encounter as a Connexion, but you cannot be aware of the enormous wickedness and unblushing Antinomianism with which we have had to contend. Many good men have left us, prejudiced and misled as must always be the case in such unhappy divisions, but I do from my heart believe that there are among us likelier elements of progress and prosperity than we have had for some time. My principal quarrel with the so-called Reformers is, that they have by their insanity and sin thrown back the cause of salutary and enlightened amendment in our institutions for an indefinite period. We are neither perfect nor infallible, but when these men assailed with utter recklessness all that was lovely and of good report . . . it was time to sink all minor schemes and sentiments, and unite in one vigorous defence of the citadel. I was in Newcastle in the thick of it, was slandered, abused, and publicly hissed; but I survived, stayed a third year, saw the tide turn, and had the chapels filled to overflowing once or twice before I left . . . I believe that I shall have cause to be thankful all my life for that fiery ordeal. I used to be so excessively sensitive to blame, I would scarcely do what I knew to be right lest it should not be palatable to all. By the grace of God I left that feeling a legacy to the Newcastle Radicals.”

“The Connexion generally is, I think, improving. It is likely that we shall again have a decrease of numbers, but, God helping us, it will be the last. There are signs of reviving in many parts of the land. We have some splendid fellows amongst us. Do you know George Steward? He is one of our first men, equal, though in a different way, to Richard Watson; Lomas, Waddy, George Osborn, Prest, Macdonald, Hurt, Vasey, Davenport, Arthur, Gervase Smith, Tyerman, Coley—each of them a tower of strength. I don’t think that in the world you will find such a ministry. It is no small thing to stand in not unhonoured companionship with such a band.

“I suppose you have seen my *Lays of Hope*. I think Charles Lister told me he had sent you a copy. I have given up poetry, or rather, the coy muse has forsaken me. Since I was married I have not written a line. . . . My dear wife—formerly Miss Vickers of Gateshead—has brought me two fine bairnies, a chatterbox of a lassie, two years old, who

rejoices in the name of Fanny Morley, and a lump of a lad, rather slower in his development, but 'biding his time.'

"Some of my principal friends in the ministry are M'Cullagh, now at Bishop Auckland; William Hirst, now at Houghton-le-Spring; M. Andrew and a few others. I am on friendly terms with most of the *younger* great men, Waddy, Osborn, Vasey, etc.

"When are you thinking of coming home? It is almost time you revisited 'the glimpses of the moon' in your own country. We shall be very ready to lionize you, as we do every returned missionary.

"Your Kaffir war seems almost interminable. There is, I hope, a better prospect of its termination now. We have just changed our Ministry again. D'Israeli is brilliant, but a charlatan, and Lord John Russell *the* statesman of England. I fear our Protestant interests will suffer from the introduction of so many tractarians into the Cabinet. Gladstone & Co. are very indifferent in the struggle between England and Rome."

TO THE REV. THOMAS M'CULLAGH.

"THORNCLIFFE, April 1st, 1853.

"A hearty, brotherly congratulation to you on your success at Leeds: I have been greatly delighted to hear of your fame. I followed on your heels in the Huddersfield circuit, and the whole conversation of some folk I met there was M'Cullaghified: 'These '45 men,' as Mr. Walker said, 'there's something in them.' We are going on 'prosily,' fifty-one increase on the quarter, twenty-seven short on the year. Methley, W. Wilson, and myself invited. A good work all over the circuit, save my poor Thorncliffe, where all languishes.

"You will have seen the April magazine, and will notify my London work. 'I exceedingly fear and quake,' but the Lord will give me strength in my day. I don't expect I shall have to speak in Exeter Hall. If I have it will be a terrible affair."

He here refers to the invitation he had received from the Missionary Committee in London to take part in the services of the approaching anniversary. Such an invitation to a minister of little more than seven years' standing was more uncommon thirty years ago than it would be to-day. It was an unusually early recognition of power and promise in a young man. Mr. Punshon might well be fluttered with hope and fear as he thought of the possibility of

having to address the great audience in Exeter Hall, an audience that would include the most distinguished ministers and laymen in the Connexion, and, in particular, those great leaders of the Conference who were, not unnaturally, regarded as the most formidable of hearers and critics.

He could hardly be unaware that a style like his — ornate, poetic, high-pitched — might not be altogether to the liking of some of those potent seniors, who were understood, rightly or not, to have little sympathy with youthful oratory. But there was no escape. The rising reputation that had made it necessary to invite the young minister from the country to preach and speak in London, required that the ordeal should be faced. The development of his life-work had reached a stage when it must enter upon a wider sphere, or fall back a failure and a disappointment.

He did his best to prepare for the duty before him, and went up to London trusting in God. The services of the anniversary commenced with a sermon at Southwark Chapel, by the Rev. G. T. Perks. On the next evening, Wednesday, Mr. Rattenbury preached to a crowded congregation at City Road. The following morning Dr. Hannah was the preacher, and on Friday morning the Rev. Norman Macleod. Mr. Punshon's work began on the Sunday, when he preached at Spitalfields in the morning, and Hinde Street in the evening. On Monday the great meeting was held in Exeter Hall. Mr. James Heald was in the chair. The report was read by Mr. Osborn, the financial statement by Mr. Hoole. The meeting was addressed in succession by Dr. Hannah; the Rev.

E. J. Robinson, then recently returned from Ceylon ; the Rev. Gibson M'Millen, from Ireland ; the Right Hon. Joseph Napier, Member for the University of Dublin, and the Rev. John Rattenbury. Dr. Newton, now an old man, within a year of the close of his blameless life and noble ministry, and still the most popular man in the Methodist ministry, was expected to speak before the meeting closed ; and with this long array of speakers behind him, and the veteran advocate of Missions to follow, Mr. Punshon was called upon to address the meeting. He spoke for some twenty minutes, and made happy and effective allusion to the venerable men upon the platform.

“I would humbly say to-day, if it may in any way cheer the declining years of those whose every affection is bound up with this great cause, that there is a goodly fellowship of us who have sworn never to desert it. I have been thinking of what I could say that might worthily occupy the few moments allotted to me. I could not discover what it was that prompted my invitation here except this, that it might be a mutual and glorious benefit,—the young instructed by the experience and counsel of the aged, and haply the aged cheered by the buoyancy and enthusiasm of the young. As Whitefield said to Wesley, when there was a rumour of Wesley's speedy departure, ‘*Nos sequamur non passibus æquis*,’ ‘We will follow ; but not with equal steps.’ Equal steps seem impossible ; but still we will follow. Depend upon it, we will follow ! It is to me a matter of unfeigned rejoicing that our Sparta hath many worthier sons than I who are ready to unite in the advocacy of this cause, and who are prepared to do and to die in it, till it finally triumph.”

The words of the young and eloquent speaker produced a great impression. It was felt that another man had arisen to stand among the foremost defenders and advocates of Christian Missions. And from that hour it was so. He had taken possession of Exeter Hall, to retain it to his life's end. Of all who have trodden its historic platform none have moved the

eager thousands that pack within its walls with completer mastery than he. The promise of this was discerned by some at least of those who heard his first speech. But in looking back upon that meeting an interest attaches to it which time only could bring to light. It was Robert Newton's last appearance at the anniversary of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, and Morley Punshon's first. For the first and last time they stood together in the cause with which their names must always be linked. The elder handed the torch to the younger and passed away. That May morning in 1853 divides the earlier from the later period of Missionary advocacy. The name of Robert Newton may stand for the one, the name of Morley Punshon for the other.

On leaving London, Mr. Punshon hastened to Norwich to fulfil the duties of a Missionary Deputation. From thence he writes to Mr. M'Cullagh:—

“NORWICH, *May 9th*, 1853.

“It was a glorious meeting in the Hall. . . . I hoped I should escape until Rattenbury was speaking. I did not get my resolution until then; when Hoole stole along the platform and said, ‘We want you to second this resolution,—twenty minutes at most, and as much less as you like.’ This was at twenty-five minutes to four, and there was Wade of Selby, and Dr. Newton, and the collection to follow. . . . I have forgotten to tell you the most gratifying thing to me; not the congregations, though Spitalfields was full, and Hinde Street crowded; nor the collections, though the morning was £13 and the evening £11 more than last year; nor the reception at the meeting, though it was warm; but that after the meeting the old doctor—the great lion—the veritable JABEZ BUNTING hobbled across the committee room for the express purpose of shaking hands with me, and telling me that it gave him pleasure to see and hear me there.

“Fancy the change from Exeter Hall to Peasenhall down in the wilds of Suffolk, beyond the limits of the twopenny post, when I began the missionary sermon with *four* people, and the collection at the meeting was *five and twenty shillings!*”

After a year's residence at Thorncliffe Mr. Punshon removed to Sheffield. This arrangement was, in every respect, a happy one for him. It removed certain difficulties which he had experienced in his work, and it placed him in the midst of congenial society. His genial nature found its best relaxation from the strain of ever-increasing labours in the hospitable homes of his people. There was no fairer aspect of Methodism in Sheffield than the home-life of its leading families, cheerful, intelligent, and unaffectedly Christian. Among these he formed some of his strongest and most abiding friendships. The ties that bound him to Sheffield stood the test of time and distance. Long years afterwards he said, "I prefer Sheffield-East to almost any circuit I know."

The Conference of 1853 met in Bradford, under the presidency of the Rev. John Lomas. Mr. Punshon and Mr. M'Cullagh spent a short time there together. One incident connected with it is recorded in a letter to a friend :—

"We have just had a beautiful and impressive scene. After the reading of an obituary by F. A. West, as by one consent all was hushed for Dr. Bunting's remarks. He could not speak, and sat, the majestic old man, with head down and frame quivering with suppressed emotion for three or four minutes. At last he rose, and calm, resigned, Christian, poured out his feelings. The feeling, the *passion* of the Conference, was intense."

TO THE REV. T. M'CULLAGH.

"SHEFFIELD, *October 6th*, 1853.

"I cannot come to Shildon. I am up to the chin. Listen :—11th Grimsby ; 12th, 13th, and 14th, among the swamps of Norfolk ('relieving and extending') ; 17th, Boston ; 18th, Howden ; 23rd and 24th, Radnor Street, Manchester ; 31st, Lincoln ; 2nd, Silsden ; 8th, York ; 21st and 22nd, Huddersfield ; 27th, Hinde Street, London, besides all circuit work

considerably increased by my removal to Sheffield ; and in the midst of all I have to finish a sermon, write a memoir of my uncle for the magazine, and last, not least, woe of woes ! to prepare a lecture for the Young Men's Christian Association, Exeter Hall. I shrink, falter, tremble, repent.

"Our new men take well. Methley puts his hand on his breast,—that enormous hand!—and throws out some very sparkling and clever and sensible things. Wilson is a pastor among a thousand ; Sugden an active Revivalist. The Lord is with us, that's the best of all. Souls are gathered in, and our main difficulty is with sickened, but not penitent, Radicals, who are coming 'in their twos and threes,' as the people say, and we hardly know how to deal with them. We had a sweep the other day—illustrating the adage, 'Two of a trade can never agree'—who, tired of the rival soot-bag at the Reform Chapel, came to us to be whitewashed."

The invitation to lecture at Exeter Hall proved to be one of the most important events in his life. It was the summons to a new sphere of labour, and his response to it influenced his whole after career. The vocation of the popular lecturer was not a new one, but it was to receive fresh interpretation at his hands. He broke away from its traditions. He had conceived of new possibilities in connection with it. Established canons of style and delivery, and existing standards and precedents, were disregarded. It was a new departure. It is the simple truth to say there had been no such lectures before. This is not to disparage the work of his predecessors and contemporaries. Here was something different in kind from what had hitherto gone by the name of lecture.

"In his hand the thing became a trumpet, whence he blew Soul-animating strains."

Reserving for the present the history of his labours and triumphs as a lecturer, together with the examination of his method and style, it is sufficient here to say that on the 17th of January, 1854, he

delivered his lecture on "The Prophet of Horeb," in Exeter Hall, to nearly three thousand people. He spoke for two hours with perfect command of himself, his subject, and his audience. Towards the close, says one who was present, there was the stillness and solemnity of death—"You might have heard a feather fall in that vast assembly;" and when the last sentence had fallen from his lips, the whole audience rose *en masse*, and cheered till it could cheer no more.

A correspondent of *The British Banner*, commenting upon a statement in that paper that "the lecture was of such a character as not to admit of being reported, so as to retain its peculiar excellences," comes to the defence of the reporter in the following strain:—

"It was unreasonable and cruel to expect such a thing. The ablest reporter, in your or any other corps, who could keep his eye and his hand down upon his paper, while that lightning was flashing, and that thunder was pealing above and around him, must have been the veriest slave to his craft that ever, for love or lucre, covenanted to fill so many columns of letterpress."

The lecture was re-delivered a few weeks later in Norfolk Street Chapel, when the building was crowded in every part, and the utmost enthusiasm manifested.

TO REV. RICHARD RIDGILL.

"SHEFFIELD, November 7th, 1854.

"My course in Sheffield has been a very happy one. The circuit was low, and it has been raised by the blessing of God upon our labours. We have added about three hundred members in the course of the last year. For twelve months we have scarcely had a Sabbath evening without witnessing conversions. Three of us hold prayer-meetings after every service, save, of course, on sacramental occasions, and the good resulting from this old-fashioned plan is inestimable. I have agreeable colleagues. Mr.

Methley is a man of considerable genius, though his taste is not always correct; Mr. Wilson is a brilliant example of cheerful and consistent piety; Sugden, out at Thorncliffe, is a valuable man of the revivalist school; so that I don't think there is in the entire Connexion an appointment equal to ours for variety and adaptation. I am in my third year, and according to our inflexible itinerancy, must budge, greatly to my sorrow, at Conference. It is possible that I may remove to Leeds, if it should please God to continue me health to work.

"I am amazed, and ready to cry 'Oh, the depth!' when I look back upon the last few years. That I should have achieved such a position in the noblest ministry in the world, is to me a source of deepest humbling, as well as of most fervent thankfulness. Last year the highest honour of my life came to me in the shape of an invitation to lecture to the Young Men's Christian Association in Exeter Hall, along with Sir James Stephen. Dr. Cumming, Close of Cheltenham, McNeile of Liverpool, Candlish of Edinburgh, and others.

"Perhaps some of the Doncastrians have sent you the *Prophet of Horeb*.

"We have some splendid names in the Methodist Ministry now, men of promise and of power. I am not speaking of the men whose reputations are established, but of the *alumni*; such as Arthur (though he is almost out of the catalogue, for his reputation is becoming world-wide), and W. B. Pope, and Perks, and J. H. James, and Wiseman, and Rigg, and Richard Roberts, and Gregory, Coley, Tyerman, Gervase Smith, Vasey, Hartley, Cranswick, E. J. Robinson, and M'Cullagh, last, not least. It is worth living to be associated with such men in the great work of saving souls. I am more and more persuaded of the high destiny of our beloved Methodism. If she be but faithful to her original mission to 'spread scriptural holiness through the land,' she may be one of the first to catch the significant fore-tokens of the Saviour's approach."

Two characteristics of the writer which only strengthened as time went on are observable in this letter,—his loyalty to Methodism, and his admiring love for his brethren in the ministry. Not that he was blind to the defects and limitations of Methodism, but they were as nothing to him compared with the glory that pertained to it as an evangelical Church, sound in doctrine, practically efficient in discipline, and rich in spiritual life.

Happily free from the right-hand and left-hand errors of sacerdotalism and rationalism, true in the main to its great calling as the servant and witness of Christ,—he regarded it as chosen and honoured among the Churches of Christendom, alike in the work assigned to it by the head of the Church, and in the blessing that crowned its testimony. He knew its history, and was imbued with its best traditions. He understood its genius, and was in sympathy with its spirit and general tendencies. It gave him adequate sphere for a life-service in the cause of Christ, and thus satisfied him mentally and spiritually. Notwithstanding the poetic vein in his nature, Mr. Punshon's mind was essentially practical. Speculative difficulties and sentimental objections went for very little with him as against experience and practical proof. Hence his devotion to Methodism was untroubled, and he could speak and act in her behalf in a whole-hearted way.

His love for his brethren has rarely been equalled. As he rose in public esteem, and was eagerly sought after from many sides, his regard even for the obscurest men in the ministry seemed to become only the more tender and considerate. He remembered names and faces, he knew where nearly every man was stationed, he had something like personal acquaintance with each. He delighted in the gifts, the accomplishments, the successes of other men. He welcomed every sign of promise among the younger ministers, and was ready, with swift appreciation, to recognise and encourage their progress in anything that was good. His capacity

of love and admiration was that of a generous nature. If it was possible to think well of a man, he did so. In any case, he spoke evil of none.

The last year of his ministry in Sheffield was one of ceaseless activity. His list of engagements bears witness to the varied claims that were now made upon his time and strength. In addition to his ordinary ministerial duties he greatly assisted Mr. Methley, his Superintendent, in large financial and administrative schemes to relieve the embarrassed chapel-trusts. These efforts culminated in a bazaar, by which the sum of £1,270 was raised,—an amount, in those days, unprecedented and all but un hoped-for. Anniversary Services, Missionary Meetings, Lectures, follow in quick succession. His journeyings, though not yet on the scale of later years, were swift and frequent. One week he is preaching in Sheffield on Sunday and Monday, at Keighley on Tuesday, at Penrith on Wednesday, at Carlisle on Thursday. Another week sees him in Sheffield, Gloucester, Cardiff, Chepstow, Stroud, and Bristol.

During the year he visited some fifty different towns in England and Wales, and preached for the first time in Ireland. With the exception of an attack of bronchitis which laid him aside for a fortnight in the winter, his health continued good, save for a certain nerve-strain of which he began to be conscious.

In February 1855 he spoke at the Annual Meeting of the Young Men's Christian Association in Exeter Hall. The Hall was crammed. He writes to Mr. M'Cullagh:—

"I was introduced to the Hon. Arthur Kinnaid, Binney, George Smith, and others. Lord Shaftesbury was pleased to characterise my address as one of 'prodigious power,' but intimated that there was just a danger lest, in seeking for the elegant phrase, I should overlay the sturdy thought."

At the Conference of 1855 his ministry in Sheffield terminated. It had been an eminently happy and successful one. There was an increase of more than two hundred members in the Society. Debts had been paid off, and difficulties of various kinds surmounted. It had been proved to himself and to others that it was possible to combine an effective ministry in his own circuit with a kind of second ministry through the Connexion at large. The applause that greeted him as a lecturer took nothing from the eagerness with which the people flocked to hear him preach the gospel. He met classes and held prayer-meetings with earnestness and unction, and no joy with which his prosperous course was crowned equalled the joy that was given to him in the conversion of souls.

Before going to Conference he found time for a short but "glorious" Highland trip, accompanied by his wife. He writes:—

"I never was more impressed with personal littleness than in the midst of God's grandeur. . . . I have just refused to lecture for the Young Men's Christian Association in their next course. I cannot stand the havoc it plays with my nerves."

And then follows a tribute to the itinerant system, which every Methodist minister will understand:—

"I have begun to feel very unsettled, and shall be, I suppose, till I change circuits."

CHAPTER V.

1855—1858.

LEEDS. Aged 31 to 34.

Leeds, Oxford-Place Circuit.—Lecture : *Science and Literature in Relation to Religion*.—Missionary Anniversary.—Begins a Journal.—Anxieties and Labours.—Lecture : *John Bunyan*.—His Method, Style, Delivery.—Views on Proposed Revision of the English Bible.

FROM Sheffield Mr. Punshon removed to the Oxford-Place Circuit, Leeds, another of the centres and strongholds of Yorkshire Methodism. If a certain restlessness had preceded his removal, it was followed by at least a brief spell of depression. The greetings with which “the new minister” is welcomed often fall upon a heart that is sore with the separation from old friends and old scenes. His first letter written from Leeds to Mr. M’Cullagh reveals something of this. The latter had just removed to Spitalfields:—

“HOLBECK, LEEDS, *September 5th, 1855.*

“May a provincial brother aspire to address a metropolitan in familiar phrase and style? How did you feel in St. George’s on Sunday morning? I hope comfortable. I started at Oxford Place and Hanover in very middling style. I am greatly discouraged, and sustained only by the abiding conviction of duty. This Holbeck location does not suit me. I seem quite out of the world. The walk to Leeds is dismally dreary and long. The house is a good, commodious, venerable affair.”

TO THE REV. T. M'CULLAGH.

“LEEDS, *January 12th*, 1856.

“All hail ! and a happy new year to you and yours. May you be crowned with every new covenant blessing. . . . The first draft is pretty well completed for next year. It is rather odd that such men as Macdonald, Illingworth, Rigg, Newstead, and others are not engaged. I have done nothing towards the biography, and see no prospect for some time. I shall have to give up this itinerancy-run-mad if I am to turn author. I go to Newcastle on Monday, Carlisle Tuesday, Penrith Wednesday, Hexham Thursday, and on the 21st to Belfast.

“Loraine has gone to Blackburn, to supply for Nattrass, who is ill. If you want a student at any time, ask for Cockill, and tell me how he gets on. He promises well.”

On 21st January Mr. Punshon crossed from Fleetwood to Belfast, and the following evening he lectured in the Victoria Hall. The lecture was entitled *Science and Literature in Relation to Religion*. This is by far the most ambitious title borne by any of his lectures. Not unnaturally, it was his earliest. In its conception it belongs to his boyish days, and in the actual form it assumed it was the work of his first years in the ministry. His idea was to show that there is no real antagonism between science and religion, and that the connection between religion and literature is one to which the latter is deeply indebted. Under the former head it cannot be said that he had anything new to bring forward. He had no such acquaintance with science as to qualify him for independent handling of his subject, or for a searching criticism of scientific unbelief. To this he made no pretence. But there were common misconceptions that he could remove ; and if his replies to infidel objections were not very original, they were, to say the least, good enough for the objections dealt with, and for the objectors

who catch them up so lightly, and pass them on with so much confidence.

The Deluge, the six days of Creation, the Mosaic chronology, the sun standing still upon Gibeon, were some of the matters on which he gave a popular answer to popular objections. Question and answer alike are now out of date. The attack and the defence of thirty years ago are antiquated, as, if we may judge from the past, those of our own time will be a generation hence. The rapid superannuation that prevails within the sphere of this controversy is very striking, and is itself an evidence of the truth of revealed religion that should not be overlooked. The important fact at each stage of the long conflict is not that the defence was inadequate, but that the attack was unsuccessful. If the perfect *Apologia* has not yet been produced, neither has the successful assault on Christianity yet been made; and, meanwhile, it holds on its way, greater than those who defend, and stronger than those who assail it.

The latter part of Mr. Punshon's lecture is that in which he moves most freely. To one who loved poetry as he did it was a genial task to dilate upon the poetry of the Bible, and to show how light from the oracles of God had been caught and reflected in the noblest verse of many ages. Here his great gifts of delivery availed him, and the hearer who might not be altogether persuaded by his reasonings was alternately awed, moved, and melted by the perfect recitation of passages from Shakespeare and Milton, from Byron, Scott, and Keats.

With regard to the more argumentative portions

of the lecture, it should be remembered that they were not set forth in prosaic bareness, nor was the hearer allowed to listen to them in cold blood. They were cast in rhetorical form, the burnished sentences being built up one upon another in a series of ascents that drew the hearer along with them to the inevitable climax.

It was the first time Mr. Punshon had lectured in Belfast, but he was already known as a preacher, and his reputation as a lecturer had gone before him. The Victoria Hall was crowded in every part. The newspapers next day gave a long list of ministers and notable persons who were present, beginning with Dr. Cooke, Dr. Morgan, and Dr. M'Cosh, and concluding with a Mr. Gregory M. Wortabet of Beyrout, and Elijah Seelaby of Samaria ! He began with a modest apology for addressing such an audience on such a theme. He came as a young man to address young men :—

“An opinion is abroad in the earth, which has been received in some quarters as conclusive, that science and religion are opposing principles, antagonist powers ; that, as if they could not breathe the same atmosphere, the one instinctively flies at the approach of the other ; and that it is impossible for a man who is deeply learned in this world's wisdom to be equally conversant with the wisdom which is of God. From this view of the subject, infidels, ever on the watch to tarnish the fair fame of Christianity, have been eager to deduce that the Gospel is a system of superstition and ignorance, unworthy the attention of an intelligent being. We believe, and will endeavour to show, that between the subjects in question there exists no natural or necessary opposition. By religion we mean Christianity, and by Christianity the system of revealed truth contained in the Holy Scriptures ; and we think that to this glorious revelation of the mind and will of God the whole circle of the sciences affords no ground of rational objection ; nay, that science is never so exalted as when submissive to religion, and that literature as her hand-maid, setting forth the transcript of her spirit, shines with a lustre not her own.”

This was the theme on which for nearly two hours he addressed the vast audience. The professors were as spell-bound as the young men and maidens, Presbyterian divines as enthusiastic as Methodist preachers. As he drew to the end the people listened as they listen to the application of a powerful sermon, or to the closing stanzas of a heart-moving song.

"Terminate in your own experience the sad divorce which has too often existed between intellect and piety. There is in our perverted nature a strong tendency to the indulgence of scepticism. The very craving of the mind after knowledge, if unsanctified, will of itself increase it. Be it your case to be determined and decided here. Take your stand, firm, dauntless, unswerving, by the altar of God, and from the altar let neither ridicule nor sophistry expel you. Learn to distinguish between clear facts and clever fancies. Along with the sentiment which rejoices in the beautiful, keep the good old sterling Saxon common sense which follows hard after the true. Let your convictions be so strong that you are not frightened to declare them. Never let the scorner's laugh—that very harmless thing—make you blush because of your profession of religion, or make you ashamed of having pious parents and a godly home. Let your faith rest, with a giant's strength, with a child's confidence, with a martyr's grip, upon the immutable truth as it is in Jesus. Young men ! Christian young men ! soldiers of the Cross ! you are called to the moral battlefield. All honour to the heroes of Alma and Inkermann ! Much as we detest war, fervently as we pray for honourable and lasting peace, the blood will rush the fleeter through the veins, and the cheek will glow with involuntary ardour, as we think of deeds that vie with Spartan fortitude and Roman fame. But in the commoner battlefields of life there are bloodier Balaclavas. In the daily walks of being, in cottage homes, in the marts of business, in sequestered nooks, in the streets of smoky mammon-worshipping towns, there are moral battles, patient resistance of evil, struggles with whelming legions of infidelity and sin, of which the world wotteth not, but which shall be registered on high, and recompensed with palms and crowns. Be you of the number of these unostentatious but valiant heroes ; so shall you raise up for your country, in the thick-vented future, her surest defence and truest glory—more impregnable far than the cannon which crest her coasts, or than the ocean which kisses her shore—a rampart of sanctified and immortal mind.

"The world seems just now to be in a state of transition. Its revolu-

tion and its restlessness, the upheaval of old strata, the superinduction of new orders of things, the passion and the clamour and the carnage, are the strange embodiments of this same transition. You behold it everywhere, burning its footprints into northern snows, breathing healthily amid the malaria of the Campagna, waking up the masses of China from their mummy-life of ages, piercing through the dense files of Brahmin and Buddhist defenders into the heart of India, startling the Pope upon the seven hills, rousing Lombard and Turkish indolence, and heaving with bold and resistless motion every heart in civilised Europe. And what is it all? It is the world's passion-cry for something that it has not, the yearning after manlier thought, and nobler aim, and freer life,—in short, man's universal heart impetuously beating after God. The Macedonian cry, 'Come over and help us,' becomes the world-cry, to be answered in the same way, by the gift of the gospel of Christ. And the good time is coming, already by the eye of faith we see it,—Christianity pervading everything, commerce purified from its selfishness, legislation from its impiety, literature from its pride, science from its scepticism, all days holy unto the Lord, every house a sanctuary, all discords toned down into the last grand harmony, and the holy music swelling up from grateful people amid the din of their cities, and echoed by the chime of the desert and solitary sea."

The applause which followed these closing sentences lasted for some minutes, breaking out again and again. Within a few months the lecture was delivered in Manchester, Liverpool, Rochdale, Nottingham, Leeds, Birmingham, and elsewhere.

Mr. Punshon's services were again in requisition in London this year for the Missionary Anniversary. Three years had elapsed since the speech in Exeter Hall to which reference has been made, and his second appearance there within so short a time,—a departure from all accepted rule and tradition in such matters—may be taken as proof, if such were needed, of his exceptional popularity.

During the summer of 1856 Mr. Punshon began to keep a journal. He did not attempt a daily record, but wrote at intervals varying from a few days to

a month or more. This he continued to do to the close of his life. The value of this journal in relation to his personal and inner history is very great; his object throughout being not only to record events, but to provide a means of self-discipline and spiritual culture. His longing for these returned upon him again and again, to be disputed and made difficult by the circumstances in which he found himself. He was now committed to a course of labour from which leisure and retirement were effectually banished. The conditions of his ministry were fixed by causes beyond his control. With the connexional economy and itinerant ministry of Methodism, every minister is the property of the whole Connexion, though the pressure of this law upon individuals varies indefinitely. The public does not always care to claim its own; hence an undistinguished man may hold on his way quietly enough, alone, for the most part, with his flock and the homely duties of his pastorate, subject only to the periodic disturbance of removal from one circuit to another. But if he have the gift of eloquence, and especially of eloquence not cloistered and severe, but sympathetic, impassioned, heart-moving, he must positively live in public. The Circuits clamour for him, committees solicit, secretaries lie in wait, his brethren implore his help, and every cause in difficulties puts in a plea for sermon, speech, or lecture. There are chapels to be opened or re-opened, anniversary sermons to be preached, missionary meetings to be addressed in a dozen counties, in fifty Circuits, and tradition and precedent are on the side of those who seek the popular preacher's aid, and against

any refusal of their appeals. Moreover, there is a deeper aspect of the matter. These crowds that flock to hear him in town and country are his sphere, his harvest-field. The power to attract and influence them is the gift committed to him. Must he not use it? Who is he to hold back from fair and abundant opportunities of serving Christ and the souls of men? And if there are accompaniments to the work of the popular preacher that grieve and humble him, are there no drawbacks to that of the quiet brother who walks one round the whole year through? Does not he also meet with what is vulgar, and selfish, and shallow? Does not, finally, the possession of certain powers, together with the demand for their exercise, afford some clue to the will of God in the matter?

There could be little doubt what Mr. Punshon's duty was. It is not imaginable that by refusing the calls that came to him from every side he could have done a better life's work than he did. Interpreting God's will by all the indications of it that are within our reach, we conclude that it was by the will of God that William Morley Punshon came to be the most itinerant member of the itinerant ministry to which he belonged.

But a price has to be paid for this. That price is, in part, the toil of constant travelling, with absence from home and family, and, in part, a certain peril to the inner life, deprived of quiet resting-places, and given over to hurry and excitement. What time is there for patient waiting upon truth, for meditation, for "the harvest of a quiet eye" and of a mind at leisure? What discipline is

to preserve the simplicity of one who is followed by eager, expectant crowds? How is humility to live in an atmosphere shaken by the frequent applause of multitudes? When all men speak well of him, can he do other than think well of himself? And after crowded services, breathless congregations, and admiration and homage of many kinds, how will he be disposed for humble exercises of prayer and self-examination, for ministering to the sick and sorrowful, and showing piety at home?

Mr. Punshon's journal reveals his jealousy over his own soul. It shows him humbled, depressed, sorrowful, even in the days of his most abundant popularity. He was never content to live upon the applause so lavishly bestowed upon him, and at times it only helped to distress him. There was a region of his spiritual life from which both world and Church were shut out, where not a breath of the praise of men was allowed to enter, where he knelt perpetually—humble, penitent, prayerful—at the feet of Jesus.

EXTRACTS FROM JOURNAL.

“HOLBECK, LEEDS.

“*June 21st, 1856.*—I have wished for some time to transcribe my fleeting feelings on religious experience, but various reasons have hitherto deterred me. To-night, by the help of God, I make a beginning. The band-meeting has been a blessed one. I have felt well, because humbled. There are many of the simple people here who are my teachers in the things of God, and I willingly sit at their feet. . . . Everything is discouraging in the Circuit,—piety loose and fitful, removals many, the spirit of prayer deadened, a decrease in numbers this quarter. These things weigh me down. Oh for the tongue of fire! I tremble at the responsibilities of the morrow.

“*June 24th.*—The Sabbath was upon the whole a good day. Some sinners were convinced of sin. This is my chiefest delight, to bring

sinner to God. Little Fanny ill. In *faithfulness* Thou hast afflicted, O Lord! Teach me the full meaning of these words.

"*July 3rd.*—The record of the past few days must be a record of mercy. My dear wife gave birth to a son on Sunday morning, and is doing well. I have had great anxiety on this matter, but God has rebuked my boding fears. . . . The day is sadly too short for the work to be done in it. I seem as if I accomplished nothing. I feel sensibly the loss I have sustained in not cultivating the habits of a close and systematic student.

"*July 8th.*—Harassed with various anxieties during the last few days; wife not so well—two children ill—self oppressed with solicitude and pain. But it is 'God which performeth all things for me.' A blessed band-meeting, a laborious but happy Sabbath, an uplifting sacrament, and some power to stay myself on God. Wherefore should I complain? The balance is on the side of mercy even according to human reckoning.

"*July 21st.*—Suffered much from the heat yesterday, but had on the whole a good day. M. . . found peace at night. I feel greatly interested in the Bible-class, and am rejoiced when, as in this instance, any of them are made happy in God. Much led out in prayer for poor * * *, who was found guilty on Saturday evening and sentenced to death. And this man's is my nature. 'There, but for the grace of God, goes old John Bradford.'

"*July 28th.*—The last has been a very solemn week. The poor condemned murderer sent for me to visit him in his cell. I felt an awful responsibility, apart from the mere natural shrinking, which was sufficiently painful, but I cast myself on the Lord. . . . In the far-off future, if I am spared to see it, this man's case will be a study (the pathology of the human heart); at present all minor questions are absorbed in the gain or loss of the soul.

"*August 8th.*—The Lord has mercifully brought me home in safety after a thousand miles of travelling in ten days in Wales and Ireland. Thanks heartfelt and continual for all His mercies. Why is my heart so callous? Why is my life so unspiritual? I mourn, go softly, and am disquieted in bitterness of soul.

"*August 26th.*—During the week at Scarborough. Prevailing deadness relieved by occasional quickenings from on high. . . . I would often gladly change all my notoriety for the calm seclusion of God's little ones who are never troubled with doubts of His favour.

"*October 11th.*—Not much improvement—listless, easily swayed by temptation. Startled and shocked to think that I have been eighteen years a professor of religion, and have made so little progress. O Lord, help! But for a consciousness that I do sincerely desire to be rid of my frailty and sin, and to have all righteousness brought in, I should despair.

“*October 18th.*—A somewhat better week. Some sweet and holy meditations, some power to rest on God. Pleasure in congenial and affectionate society. Two very admirable Bible-meetings, in which I have been privileged to speak a word for God. A hallowed influence last Sabbath—fifteen in distress of soul. *Laus Deo!*

“*November 16th.*—Children still ill, mending very slowly. ‘Drooping wife and pallid child.’ But the Lord is good, and doth not willingly grieve.

“*December 9th.*—Oh! how largely have I to bless God for His goodness to-day. For the last ten days I have been a sufferer, ‘oft to the bed of feverish sickness bound.’ I trust the chastening has been hallowed, but I fear I have been sadly impatient. Troubles abroad and troubles at home, but my soul doth magnify the Lord.

“*January 29th, 1857.*—I have been very much engaged during the interval which has elapsed since my last entry. My health has been much better—a week at Scarborough did me great good. Children ill. It seems as if ours were still to be a heritage of suffering. Oh for a resigned and trusting heart! Much cheered by observing the power of religion exemplified on the deathbed of one of my flock, the soul intensely happy in pain and feebleness extreme. Things are, I think, a little more hopeful in the Circuit, and in my own soul there is a desire after greater things than these. Oh for the baptism, long-sought and long-deferred!

“*February 14th.*—A better week. God is evidently reviving His work in the midst of us. A spirit-stirring and blessed band-meeting to-night. Much family trouble and domestic sickness still. Concerned about my dear wife, who is very unwell. Lord, give grace.

“*February 22nd.*—Still to record domestic affliction. Poor Fanny again prostrate, John William and Morley sympathetically ill. My precious wife weakly, myself a sufferer. But my faith rises, and I think my patience grows. Oh for the perfect submission, the whole Image, that then the gentle Refiner may withdraw the fire, if it be His will! Delivered my lecture to an immense and excited audience in Oxford Place on Wednesday. . . . Several are being brought to God in Holbeck. I have been searching my own heart (Avaunt, Sathanas!), and I think I can truly say that the joy of success like that of Wednesday is a smaller joy to me than to see the first gush of gladness and of praise from a newly-forgiven sinner.

“*March 8th.*—It has been a fortnight of multiplied excitements. I have lectured to vast audiences in Manchester, Stockport, and Bradford, and have had an exciting Oxford-Place Sabbath between. I feel very grateful to God for the measure of health which, after these unusual services, I enjoy; and more deeply grateful that I am sensible of but little elation (I dare not say of none), and that I trust I have come out of the perilous trial, if not unscathed, at least, by God’s grace, unscarred.

Why, indeed, with an evil heart and a weak faith, with a little self-knowledge and a little appreciation of the flimsy grounds on which the masses draw conclusions, with a morbid nervousness and an ailing family,—why should I be proud?

“*March 24th.*—Much impressed with the death of Mr. Cusworth, who baptized me, and of Daniel West, cut off in the prime of usefulness and years. Oh to be ready!

“*April 18th.*—For the last three weeks I have been for the most part in Cornwall on a missionary deputation, and I record, to the praise of God, and with a thankful heart, that He has sustained me through nineteen arduous services, and in travels of about one thousand miles. I have had much enjoyment and success in my work, large congregations, and much unction from on high.

“*May 9th.*—Another affecting instance of the uncertainty of life in the death, after two days’ illness, of my friend Neriah Simpson, of Armley. What mystery in God’s providence! A young man in the prime of a devoted life, laying himself out for usefulness in a spot where help is sorely needed, and where adverse influences are strong, suddenly snatched away. My faith was for a while staggered, and I seemed to arraign the proceedings of Heaven at the bar of my wayward and limited reason. But calmer thought and prayer have led me to hope and trust.

“*May 15th.*—Still under the shadow of death. My dear grandfather, a ripe shock of corn, was safely housed in the heavenly garner yesterday. Truly admonitions are repeated, and I would fain learn their lesson. . . . Have experienced the truth of a remark of Foster’s, that the highest excitements very soon degenerate into sensual ones without careful watching over the wayward heart.

“*May 30th.*—Through the good providence of God I have been permitted to enter upon another year of my life. Yesterday I completed my thirty-third year. The past has been a year of varied experience, sickness no stranger, death on my skirts, family circumstances harassing and painful, and yet the mercies preponderate. We have had no death in our immediate circle. I have been permitted to enlarge my influence, and I trust my usefulness. I have had much domestic and social enjoyment, and some blessed religious seasons.

“*June 20th.*—Felt humbled and happy at receiving tidings of the conversion of an interesting girl at Brixton last week. To be owned of God to turn sinners to Himself is my chiefest earthly joy.

“*August 3rd.*—A week for the most part spent at the Conference in Liverpool. Elevated to the platform by vote of the brethren. A hallowed Sabbath yesterday. Very high and godly feeling under Bishop Simpson at night.

“*September 20th.*—A hallowed Sabbath was the last. Was enabled by God’s good help to preach with pleading earnestness for souls. Spoke

unadvisedly with my lips at the district meeting on Tuesday. Oh! how shall I overcome this tendency? I shall be of little permanent use, either in counsel or in preaching, with this unconquered sin. Received on Thursday a letter from M. E. P., opening her mind on spiritual subjects. I feel much of a pastor's yearning towards the members of my Bible-class.

"October 9th.—During the past ten days have been greatly harassed with the affliction of my dear wife. There is evidently great weakness, and some considerable irritation in the lungs. Lord, lay not this trial upon me. 'If it be possible, let this cup pass from me.' May I breathe the resignation as well as the earnestness of my Saviour's prayer.

"October 23rd.—Still under the shadow of the cloud, and not yet able to catch a glimpse of the silver lining. The doctor evidently considers the case a grave one. I have no future now. . . . My precious Maria! The suspense is agonizing. To whom shall I go but unto Thee, O God, who for my sins art justly displeased. Oh! my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, help me to say, Not my will, but Thine be done. Especially take the loved one into Thy keeping. Fill her soul with all heavenly comfort. Underneath her place the everlasting arms.

"October 30th.—Still no amendment. New symptoms coming with each day. Surely the pride of my heart will be trampled out under the feet of this long sorrow. My cry is yet—Spare! if possible, spare! Undertake for me, O my God, for the proud waters go over my soul.

"November 22nd.—My mind greatly harassed. Wife seriously ill, two children ill, servant ill, and poor Helen R., whose wedding I attended only a few months ago, died on Wednesday. I feel my heart full. I can bear no more. Lord, do not let me lose the firm belief that Thou art kind. . . . Lectured last night in Sunderland. Finished my Uncle Clough's Memoir.

"January 2nd, 1858.—The past has been a year of painful vicissitudes, —sickness, trial, bereavement,—and yet I have had abundant mercy, and would raise the 'stone of help' to the glory of the wisdom which has counselled and the love which has preserved and redeemed me. I had four letters on the morning of the new year, each with its mourning border. My dear and noble friend Mr. Parkin has escaped away."

A few weeks later Mrs. Punshon was removed to Clifton, in the hope that her health might be benefited. The journal resumes:—

"February 17th.—Through mercy my wife has passed through the journey as well as could be expected, and I left her yesterday in comfort-

able lodgings to return to my solitary home. May the angel of His presence watch over the loved ones at Clifton !

" *March 6th.*—My dearest wife writes very hopefully of herself, and the doctor's report is more favourable.

" *March 27th.*—Distressed again, and sorely, by a slight relapse. My wife has been under active medical treatment again. Dr. Symonds has been called in. My faith almost failed last night, but I threw myself under the shadow of the mercy-seat, and after great agony of flesh and spirit I feel to-day comparatively calm. Mrs. Musgrave gone to her reward, and good old Mr. Lynch. My dear friend Mr. Squance is now the only survivor of Dr. Coke's missionary band.

" *May 29th.*—What day more fitting to renew and to record my covenant ! By the good providence of God I have completed my thirty-fourth year, and have had as lengthened an earthly probation as sufficed for the whole incarnate work of the Redeemer. Alas ! in the review of the past, how fruitful of evil, how barren of good ! My first duty this morning, which with a full heart I performed, was solemnly and formally to pay my vows unto the Lord. The past has been a year of unexampled sorrow—I never knew trouble until now ; but it has also been a year of great grace. I keep this birthday with a wife's sickness and a child's funeral ; for dear little Walter was suddenly released from earth and suffering on Thursday morning. . . . A very flattering critique upon me in the *Pulpit Observer*,—noticed here simply to record how miserable such small vanities appear when one great sorrow fills the struggling spirit. Lord, let Thy mercy be upon me according as I hope in Thee.

" *June 27th.*—Nothing worse in my dear object of solicitude, but very slow progress towards recovery. Very much comforted by thoughts of a passage in St. James, ' Behold ! we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the *end* of the Lord, that He is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.' . . . Dr. Bunting, a prince and a great man, gone to his eternal reward full of honours as of years."

During their residence in Leeds two sons were born to Mr. and Mrs. Punshon, Percy in June 1856, and Walter in August 1857. From the birth of the latter, who died when only eight months old, Mrs. Punshon's health was never really good, and before long symptoms of consumption began to show themselves. There were periods of improvement and again of decline, giving rise to alternate hopes and fears in the heart of her husband. These find ex-

pression in the journal, but as time passed on hope diminished, and fear deepened to a distress that all but overwhelmed him. But still the round of unceasing labour was maintained. On Sundays he seldom failed to preach in his own Circuit, and Oxford-Place, Hanover-Place, and Headingley Chapels were crowded with eager hearers. On week-days he flew in ever-widening circles through the country, preaching, addressing missionary meetings, and delivering lectures. In 1856 he visited ninety different towns, and in the following year upwards of eighty. The claims upon him were now almost innumerable; and to the full measure of his strength, if not beyond it, he responded to them. A fairly representative week's work includes two sermons in Leeds on Sunday and a speech on Monday, a missionary meeting in Staffordshire on Tuesday, a lecture in South Wales on Wednesday, and two sermons on Thursday, another in Bristol on Friday, and on Saturday travelling home to prepare for similar labours the week following. Nor does the bare statement of journeys made and sermons preached reveal the whole case. Each service was, in many senses of the word, a "special" one. Locally it had been matter of expectation for weeks, perhaps for months. In the great towns no buildings were large enough to hold all who wished to hear him. Exeter Hall, the Town Hall, Birmingham, the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, St. George's Hall, Bradford, were filled to their utmost capacity. Into spacious chapels like those of Hull and Lincoln, of Plymouth and Penzance, seat-holders were admitted by private entrance before the doors were opened to the rush of the general

public. In country places shops would be closed earlier than usual, and the whole district would wear an air of holiday as the people streamed in from the outlying villages. There was an excitement awakened by his coming to a neighbourhood that could not but re-act upon himself. It strung him to high efforts. It wrought upon his emotions, and stimulated his powers to the utmost. It was in the pulpit that he felt most deeply, that his spiritual nature was most profoundly moved and drawn upon; but it was on the platform that the physical and nervous strain was at its highest. Moreover, the tension at which he worked was seldom, if ever, relaxed. Many a man called to great public labours has a quiet sphere at home to which he can retreat, and where he cannot be pursued; and, in simple ministrings to a little flock, the spirit that has been strained and worn by the duties of a prominent position, or an exacting office, may be calmed and restored. But it was part of the sacrifice accompanying his life-work that there was little of this for him. To meet high-pitched expectation without disappointing it, to be always equal to himself,—this is the necessity laid upon the popular preacher, and upon no preacher of the last generation did it press with greater weight and constancy than upon William Morley Punshon.

In February 1857 he delivered his second Exeter Hall lecture, that on *Bunyan*. The only reference to it in his journal is, “My lecture in London, though it prostrated my strength, was delivered with freedom and power by the help of God. All our troubles are worse in anticipation than in reality.”

“Better than my boding fears
To me Thou oft hast proved.”

These words give no hint of the impression produced by this lecture, an impression difficult to describe, and still more difficult for those who never heard him to understand. For immediate effect upon the audience it may be said with truth that it has seldom been equalled, and never surpassed. The vast audience, if not critical or fastidious, was fairly representative of the intelligence of the Churches, and included an unusual proportion of persons accustomed to hear the most eminent speakers of the day. There were three thousand people present. The lecture occupied more than an hour and a half in the delivery, during which he never once looked at the few notes he held in his hand, or hesitated for a word. Mr. M'Cullagh says:—

“He spoke with his usual captivating elocution, and with immense energy and force. Feeling amongst the audience grew ; enthusiasm was awakened, and gathered force as he went on. At last, at one of his magnificent climaxes, the vast concourse of people sprang tumultuously to their feet. Hats and handkerchiefs were waved ; sticks and umbrellas were used in frantic pounding of the floor ; hands, feet, and voices were united in swelling the acclamations. Some shouted ‘Bravo!’ some ‘Hurrah!’ some ‘Hallelujah!’ and others ‘Glory be to God!’ Such a tornado of applause as swept through Exeter Hall, and swelled from floor to ceiling, I have never witnessed before or since.”

Those who can recall scenes like that depicted by Mr. M'Cullagh have often asked themselves the secret of the spell ; while such as have only heard or read of the effect produced by Mr. Punshon on his audiences may well inquire by what kind of mastery he moved them in quick succession to laughter and

to tears, to breathless awe and wild excitement. One thing may be taken as certain—though it be but a truism when stated—that there was an adequate cause for such extraordinary results. In the sphere of oratory, as elsewhere, effects without causes are not to be thought of. Whitefield's sermons and Fox's speeches may leave us puzzled to account for their influence over the mob at Moorfields in the one case, and the patriots and placemen at Westminster in the other; but if there is nothing in what has come down to us that will explain it, we may be sure that there were qualities physical, mental, moral accompanying their presence and belonging to their personality that would furnish the explanation. The time is fast coming when the tradition of Mr. Punshon's eloquence will set those who read his lectures asking, "What is there here, what was there that is *not* here, to account for the impression produced on those who heard him?" To this question something like an answer must be attempted, although such explanations are proverbially difficult to give. A recent biographer of Charles James Fox says of him, "There is an insuperable difficulty in setting forth the secret of his oratorical greatness." The historians of Methodism relate that when Dr. Adam Clarke was asked for a description of Samuel Bradburn's eloquence he replied, "I have never heard his equal. I can furnish you with no adequate idea of his powers as an orator. Another Bradburn must be created, and you must hear him for yourself, before you can receive a satisfactory answer to your inquiry." The secret of William Morley Punshon's eloquence is not much easier to describe than that of the orators

above named; but failure to do so will be lightly judged when incurred in such good company.

To what extent, then, does the lecture on John Bunyan explain or justify the language of Mr. M'Cullagh, and of others, as to its surpassing effect when delivered?

The following is a bare outline of the subject as treated :—

“Certain periods of history are characterised by special vitality and vigour.

“Such was the *Puritan era*; an age of *great events* and of *great men*.

“Main facts of BUNYAN'S history rehearsed. Youth, conversion, imprisonment, release, death.

“BUNYAN *considered as a WRITER*. Eulogy on the *Pilgrim's Progress*. A plea for the consecration of intellectual power to the service of religion.

“BUNYAN'S *loyalty to the WORD OF GOD*. Authority of Scripture asserted against the scepticism of the day. Revision of the Authorised Version is deprecated.

“BUNYAN *as a PREACHER*. The mission of the pulpit. A commanding ministry one great want of the times.

“BUNYAN'S *thorough humanness a source of power*. The discipline of trial. The power of sympathy and love. The new crusade.

“BUNYAN A CONFESSOR FOR THE TRUTH. The young man's call in our day.

“The watcher of the night. The vision of the dawn.”

As an outline this calls for little remark. There is no special originality, or striking felicity of plan; nor is there obvious want of either. An expert would probably say of it, “Everything depends upon its working out. There is nothing here to ensure success, or to prevent it. All things are possible, from leaden dulness to the highest originality and power.”

A frame or skeleton like this bears the same relation to the finished composition that the naked

stem and leafless boughs of winter bear to the ample foliage and clustering fruit of summer. We must see it "clothed upon" before we can judge the good or evil husbandry.

Turning then to the discourse itself, it must be admitted that its narrative portions show no independent research, that its criticism is not marked by special insight, and that the lessons enforced are familiar even to triteness. So far as ideas are concerned we are kept well within accustomed limits. The channel is buoyed, and our landmarks are never out of sight.

Nevertheless, there is originality from first to last. Both the general conception and the details by which the whole result is secured, are determined by certain instincts or primary qualities of the writer's mind. We use the word "writer," and can hardly do otherwise, seeing that the lecture was written before it was delivered, and by subsequent publication has taken permanent literary form; but it is the production not of a writer but of an orator. The inspiration that moves, the ideal that presides, is not that of literature, but of eloquence; the structure, the succession, the rhythm of the sentences show that they were meant to be heard, not read.

The orator may borrow the tools of literature, but he uses them in the interests of oratory. It is not denied that a man may possess both gifts, the oratoric and the literary; but that they are distinct, with a certain tendency to mutual antagonism, will be generally admitted. The exceptions to this are hardly more than sufficient to prove the rule.

Where the literary worker, bending at his desk, sees beforehand his reader, silent, solitary, book in hand, the orator, as he prepares his speech, has visions of the great audience; he sees the upturned faces, he feels the answering throb, he hears the thunders of applause. This vision controls him; it governs style and diction, argument, illustration, everything. The writer, though he may hope for innumerable readers, writes for them, as it were, singly and separately, and speaks to them one at a time. This is precisely what the orator does not. To him individuals are nothing. It is with numbers that he deals, with numbers warmed and quickened, if possible, by that genial sense of kinship which makes a thousand pulses beat like one.

It is needless to say to which of the two classes thus broadly distinguished Mr. Punshon belonged. By temperament and cast of mind he was an orator. Within the chambers of his heart and brain invisible audiences assembled, were dismissed, and came together again continually. They were with him as he read, and thought, and wrote. For them his ideas as they rose took rhetorical form, and clothed themselves in language ornate and rhythmical. By the law alike of his intellectual and of his emotional nature the movement from impression to expression was swift and instinctive. As the youthful poet could only say when scolded for his rhyming,

"O father, pray some pity take,
And I will no more verses make,"

so the master-tendency in Morley Punshon carried him irresistibly toward flowing sentences and high-built paragraphs. However artificial his method

might appear, however elaborate his style, they were natural in the truest sense of the word, for they sprang from the essential characteristics of his mental constitution. It was so from the first. If he did not exactly "lisp in numbers," yet his earliest compositions show the feeling for language that marked him to the last. His boyish efforts contain the promise of all he ever accomplished in the way of public speech.

The lecture on Bunyan is an oration, not an essay. As the eye rests upon what was prepared for the ear, it is like reading the report of a great speech, or looking over a speaker's manuscript instead of listening to his voice.

It will be seen, however, on examination, to be constructed with consummate skill to secure immediate and telling result. Without delay, yet with no undue haste, the way into the subject is led by a few reflections on history, its pathetic and its noble aspects, and we are brought into the seventeenth century, and into the presence of JOHN BUNYAN. There is no attempt to invest the familiar and the commonplace with sham dignity, but they are not allowed to drag, or spoil the procession of the sentences. Where the narrative is at its least heroic level it is still bright, swift-moving, attractive, the sentences neither involved nor abrupt, always intelligible, often revealing an unexpected felicity of phrase or epithet, or harmonious balance of clauses.

Sometimes by rapid change of key, more frequently by gradual elevation, the ascent is made to a loftier and more impassioned strain. It is in these ascents,

whether rising only to half-way heights, or sweeping upwards to some supreme climax, that Punshon was most himself, that the characteristics of his style and method found intensest expression.

These climaxes can be traced in most of his sermons and lectures. The calmest reader will find himself drawn into a current whose speed continually increases; there is a movement of quickened thought and heightened feeling that hurries him along; the language grows bolder, more impassioned, more pathetic, until at last it culminates in some paragraph whose subtle modulations "long drawn out" leave music in the ear and emotion in the heart.

Something of this will be felt in the following extract. Bunyan is in prison:—

"And now it is nightfall. They have had their evening worship, and, as in another dungeon, 'the prisoners heard them.' The blind child receives the fatherly benediction. The last good-night is said to the dear ones, and Bunyan is alone. His pen is in his hand, and his Bible on the table. A solitary lamp relieves the darkness. But there is fire in his eye, and there is passion in his soul. 'He writes as if joy did make him write.' He has felt all the fulness of his story. The pen moves too slowly for the rush of feeling as he graves his own heart upon the page. There is beating over him a storm of inspiration; great thoughts are striking on his brain and flushing all his cheek. Cloudy and shapeless in their earliest rise within his mind, they darken into the gigantic, or brighten into the beautiful, until at length he flings them into bold and burning words. He is in a dungeon no longer. He is in the palace Beautiful, with its sights of renown and songs of melody, with its virgins of comeliness and of discretion, and with its windows opening for the first kiss of the sun. His soul swells beyond the measure of its cell. It is not a rude lamp that glimmers on his table. It is no longer the dark Ouse that rolls its sluggish waters at his feet. His spirit has no sense of bondage. No iron has entered into his soul. Chainless and swift, he has soared to the Delectable Mountains; the light of heaven is around him; the river is the one, clear as crystal, which floweth from the throne of God and of the Lamb; breezes of Paradise blow freshly across it, fanning his temples and stirring his hair. From the summit of the hill Clear he catches rarer

splendours—the new Jerusalem sleeps in its eternal noon; the shining ones are there, each one a crowned harper unto God; this is the land that is afar off, and THAT is the King in His beauty; until, prostrate beneath the insufferable splendour, the dreamer falls upon his knees and sobs away his agony of gladness in an ecstasy of prayer and praise.”

After an earnest appeal to young men “to cast out of themselves the false, and the selfish, and the defiling, and to be sincere workers for the glory of God and for the benefit of men,” he closed with a dream vision of “the diviner future which shall yet burst on this ransomed world”:—

“Wearily have the years passed, I know: wearily to the pale watcher on the hill who has been so long gazing for the daybreak; wearily to the anxious multitudes who have been waiting for his tidings below. Often has the cry gone up through the darkness, ‘Watcher, what of the night?’ and often has the disappointing answer come, ‘It is night still; here the stars are clear above me, but they shine afar, and yonder the clouds lower heavily, and the sad night winds blow.’ But the time shall come, and perhaps sooner than we look for it, when the countenance of that pale watcher shall gather into intenser expectancy, and when the challenge shall be given with the hopefulness of a nearer vision, ‘Watcher, what of the night?’ and the answer comes, ‘The darkness is not so dense as it was; there are faint streaks on the horizon; mist is in the valleys, but there is radiance on the distant hills. It comes nearer—that promise of the day. The clouds roll rapidly away, and they are fringed with amber and gold. It is—it is, the blest sunlight that I feel around me—MORNING!’

“*It is morning!* And in the light of that morning thousands of earnest eyes flash with renewed brightness, for they have longed for the coming of the day. And in the light of that morning things that nestle in dust and darkness flee away. Morning for the toil-worn artisan! for oppression and avarice and gaunt famine are gone, and there is social night no more. Morning for the meek-eyed student! for doubt has fled, and sophistry is silenced, and the clouds of error are lifted from the fair face of truth, and there is intellectual night no more. Morning for the lover of man! for wrongs are redressed, and contradictions harmonized, and problems solved, and there is moral night no more. Morning for the lover of God! for the last infidel voice is hushed, and the last cruelty of superstition perpetrated, and the last sinner lays his weapons down, and Christ the Crucified becomes Christ the Crowned. Morning!

Hark how the earth rejoices in it, and its many minstrels challenge the harpers of the sky—‘Sing with us, ye heavens! The morning cometh, the darkness is past, the shadows flee away, the true light shineth now.’ Morning! Hark how the sympathetic heavens reply, ‘Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw herself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended!’ IT IS MORNING! ‘The planet now doth, like a garment, wear the beauty of the morning.’ And the light climbeth onward and upward, for there is a sacred noon beyond. That noon is *Heaven*. AND THERE SHALL BE NO NIGHT THERE.”

During the last five-and-twenty years, style, in the pulpit and on the platform, has become noticeably plainer and more severe. Perhaps recoil from the florid has carried us as far in the direction of what is flat and tame as is desirable. But even a generation ago a flight like this was well-nigh as perilous a venture as it would be to-day. The peril to the speaker is that of taking his flight alone. To fail to carry the hearers with him through each stage of the ascent, and kindle feeling as fervent as his phrases, is not mere failure,—it is disaster. The response of the audience is the verdict on the attempt.

To those who remember Mr. Punshon in the days of his unbroken health and radiant joy of existence, the extracts just given will serve to recall “the sound of the voice that is still”; but to others they will but faintly suggest the effect produced at the time. It was in the delivery of the lecture that the full measure of his gifts was revealed.

His memory carried lightly and easily the burden of his longest orations. There was no hesitation, no effort to recollect, but a free, joyous, “full-throated ease” of utterance, a manifest mastery of his task that told at once upon the audience. In the open-

ing sentences, which were almost invariably short and terse, there was a certain harshness of voice that grated on the ear, and yet, by its incisiveness, compelled attention and awakened expectation. As he proceeded the harshness passed away, the tones grew clear and mellow, and the voice, naturally vibrant and penetrating, disclosed unexpected range and modulation, from the whisper that three thousand people heard in breathless silence, to the exultant shout that was echoed by irrepressible applause. His elocutionary power was consummate. Though not otherwise musically gifted, his feeling for the melody of words and the larger harmony of sentences was instinctive and well-nigh unerring. Not a syllable was slurred or slighted. Not an intonation was wanting that could give expression to his meaning, or add beauty to tender or to stately language. There was a rhythmic beat in his tones that wrought upon the ear like a spell. Under its influence men found themselves stretching forward as though drawn bodily, or rising from their seats as in a presence that called them to their feet.

His use of emphasis was most remarkable. The emphatic utterance of a single word seemed to strike fire through the whole sentence. The master-word in the crowning sentence of a period received accentuation that furnished barb and feather to the shaft, and sent it irresistibly home. None who heard it will ever forget the world of pathetic suggestion conveyed by his utterance of the word *home* when quoting from Bunyan, "I was had home to prison;" or the hoarse whisper, as of conspirators, in which he repeated the words of the princes of

Babylon, "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, *except we find it against him concerning the law of his God;*" or the tone in which, in his lecture on the Huguenots, he dismissed Antoine of Navarre, "Pass quickly out of sight! for we are longing to look upon a MAN." In this particular power, this touch electric by which a single word was made to discharge the passion or the pathos of an entire paragraph, Mr. Punshon stood alone among the public speakers of his day. He did not use it too often. It never became a mere trick. It was only possible, indeed, at a certain temperature, when both thought and language were well kindled, best of all on the attainment of some climax, when the impassioned tone and the accented word would smite the ear, and something like a murmur, or half-suppressed sob, revealed the emotion of the hearers, to be followed by release from almost painful tension, and outburst of tumultuous cheering.

To a new generation this may appear a strained and exaggerated description; but there are multitudes still remaining who, without accepting it as adequate, could bear witness that it does not err by excess, but is a faithful attempt to describe a style of eloquence unlike any other that they have known.

There is one passage in the lecture on Bunyan to which reference must be made before passing from the subject. He says, "I would fain be one among the 'cloud of witnesses' who have testified against the clamour for a new version of the Bible." His protest is made at considerable length, and with much energy. He considered Christianity im-

perilled by the proposal to revise the Authorized Version; he asks, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" He quotes Faber's eulogium (assigned by him, as it so frequently is by others, to Dr. Newman), "It lives in the soul with a music that can never be forgotten, like the sound of church bells which the convert hardly knows how he can forego;" and cries, "Hands off!" to all who would meddle with it. This will sound strange language to those of us who are familiar with the Revised Version, and forget, or perhaps do not know, through what stages of opposition and manifold hindrances the revision had to pass on its way to actual accomplishment. That the apprehensions of good men have in this, as in so many other instances, proved groundless is surely matter of rejoicing, and possibly this lesson of the past will bear to be applied to some of our present misgivings. But in explanation of Mr. Punshon's attitude towards an undertaking with which he afterwards heartily sympathised, two things may be said: first, what he would have said himself—that he was mistaken, that he spoke without properly understanding a question to which he had paid no special attention; and second, that, for various reasons, the cry for revision thirty years ago caused an uneasiness in the Churches that was neither unnatural nor irrational. In Parliament and in the newspapers the subject was discussed in a manner that could hardly fail to alarm and offend. There was much exaggeration. The errors of the Authorized Version were represented as far greater and more considerable than they were. Persons joined in the fray

to whose free and confident handling one might well hesitate to entrust so precious a possession. The biblical scholars who were to lay the case fully and fairly before the country had scarcely entered upon their task. Mr. Punshon's lecture was delivered in February 1857; the *Revision by Five Clergymen* appeared a month later, while Dean Trench's work, examining the whole question with characteristic wisdom and moderation, was not published till 1859. The writings of Bishops Ellicott and Lightfoot belong to a considerably later period, and did much to allay misgivings, and bring opinion round to the desirableness of a revision of the Authorized Version. After a certain stage in the discussion of the question, opposition quickly died away, and it became difficult to realise how strong it had been. In 1859 Dean Trench himself would not go further than this: "On the whole I am persuaded that revision ought to come; I am convinced that it will come. Not, however, let us trust, as yet; for we are not as yet in any respect prepared for it. There is much of crude and immature in nearly all the contributions which have been, and for some time yet will be, made to this object." In America, about the same time, Professor Marsh, in a lecture delivered at Columbia College, New York, decided against revision as "not merely unnecessary, but, with our knowledge of language, wholly premature;" and again, "I think we may justify the general conclusion that, as there is no present necessity for a revision, so is there no possibility of executing a revision in a way that would be, or ought to be, satisfactory even to any

one Protestant sect, still less to the whole body of English-speaking Protestants.”

With the great majority of English-speaking Christians, Mr. Punshon laid aside his fears as the proposals for revision took definite form, and the principles on which it should proceed were laid down. He lived to rejoice that personal friends of his own, Methodist ministers like himself, were of the company of revisers, though he did not live to see the fruit of their labours. The Revised New Testament was not published until one month after his death.

Mr. M'Cullagh's account of the lecture in Exeter Hall concludes as follows :—

“ At the close of the lecture several gentlemen urged me to dissuade him from going to Cambridge next day to preach, as they thought rest was essential after such a tremendous effort. After supper he and I chatted into the small hours. He told me that he composed the lecture while walking in his study at Leeds, and tossing a penny from his thumb, which he caught as it fell. He wrote the whole of it on his memory first, and then sat down and put it on paper, word for word. At last he asked, ‘What o'clock is it, Mac?’ Quoting from the peroration of the lecture, I answered, ‘It's morning! it's morning!’ He laughed, and said, ‘I did not expect so speedy an application of my own words to my own case.’ Next day he went to Cambridge, and fulfilled his—I believe—first engagement in that university town.”

The following are extracts from letters to Mr. Hirst written about this time :—

“LEEDS, *February 16th*, 1857.

“I can give you Tuesday, March 31st (D.V.), if you will promise not to work me too hard, for I start on my Cornish Deputation on the Thursday after, and shall need to husband all my strength. They have sold two thousand tickets for my lecture here to-morrow. I have to give it in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, Teviot Dale, Stockport, and perhaps St. George's Hall, Bradford. I wish the next three weeks were over. Poor M. H.! I have been condemned that in all our intercourse I spoke so

little of Jesus, though I am thankful that I was permitted to warn and counsel her, though not so much as I ought to have done."

"LEEDS, *March 6th*, 1857.

"I charge five guineas for a lecture; I preach 'without money and without price.' Have your choice. The physical strain of a lecture is so great that I have been obliged to lay down this rule. Moreover, I could not preach in the afternoon and lecture at night. I have no objection to do what you think best on these terms. If I lecture, one service and a charge. If I preach, two services, and nought but my expenses and your love."

On the day that Mr. Punshon gave his lecture in Manchester, a letter appeared in the *Manchester Examiner*, signed "A True Lover of Bunyan," in which the lecturer's presumption and wickedness in venturing to take such a theme were vigorously denounced.

"Mr. Punshon may prove a very popular lecturer, or he may not—on that point opinions may vary; but I do most strongly protest against Mr. Punshon, or any other Wesleyan *Conference* preacher, making capital out of good John Bunyan. What principles have Wesleyan preachers in common with Bunyan? I answer fearlessly, none. In their little way, they make despotic laws independently of their people, execute them tyrannically, and persecute to the extent of their powers all their members who, like John Bunyan, resist them. Imagine, Sir, the Archbishop of Canterbury lecturing on Cromwell, or Cardinal Wiseman lecturing on Martin Luther! What a monstrous anomaly that would be! I think Mr. Punshon equally out of place, and I feel bound to warn the Christian public of Manchester against such strange inconsistencies."

* But the Christian public refused the warning, and so great was the rush into the Free Trade Hall that, when the doors were opened, a minister who was in the crowd was carried bodily up into the gallery without ever putting a foot upon the stairs.

CHAPTER VI.

1858—1859.

LONDON, BAYSWATER. *Aged 34 to 35.*

Appointed to the Hinde Street Circuit.—Work at Bayswater.—Mr. Arthur's Recollections.—Memories of Mr. Punshon and his Colleagues at Hinde Street, by "*Hæc meminisse juvat.*"—Death of his wife.—Lecture : *The Huguenots.*—Raises £1,000 for Spitalfields Chapel.—The Conference at Manchester : Debate on the Bayswater Case.—Devotional Meeting at the Free Trade Hall.

AT the Conference of 1858 Mr. Punshon's term of ministry in Leeds expired. He had accepted an invitation to succeed Mr. M'Cullagh at Bow in the "Third London," or Spitalfields, Circuit. But as the time for removal drew near, the state of Mrs. Punshon's health was such as to make a residence at Bow undesirable. It was felt on all sides that some other arrangement must be made, such as would provide at once an adequate sphere of labour for him and a suitable place of residence for his invalid wife. Various suggestions were made, and the matter was finally settled by his appointment to the Hinde Street Circuit, to reside at Bayswater, and take charge of the chapel in Denbigh Road, then newly erected.

The following letter from Mr. Edward Corderoy, of the Lambeth Circuit, a layman of large heart and

keen intelligence, although written a year before Mr. Punshon removed to London, may be inserted here :—

“June 13th, 1857.

“ . . . In reference to the ‘secret,’ should the post be offered fairly by the Committee, take it by all means, *but only on one condition*, that it does not interfere with your preaching twice every Sunday at least, nor with due preparation for the pulpit. This is your glorious mission—to preach Christ, to save souls ; the noblest, holiest work on earth, to which everything should be subordinated, compared with which everything is little. *Nothing* should interfere with this.

“Next, *but still inferior*, to this, is the platform advocacy which pleads for Christian missions on the highest grounds ; not the claptrap speeches which only aim at present effect in a collection, but those which raise the people to the height of the great argument—Christian obligation, because Christ commands—Christian privilege, because Christ invites—Christian honour, because Christ gives success to human agency. The heart and head touched, stewardship will be recognised and gold will follow.

“But you must not only plead that others be sent to preach, but preach that others may be saved. You dare not evade your call to the ministry. I am sure you have no disposition to do so.

“My notion of the sphere for you is, London, large chapels, crowds of young men, earnest proclamation of the gospel, a good colleague skilled in administration who shall form Bible-classes, enrol members, ascertain their character and talents, and from among them furnish the Church with stewards, class-leaders, Sunday-school teachers, and all other labourers required.”

The Hinde Street Circuit of 1858 embraced the vast district which may be roughly described as beginning at Regent Circus, Oxford Street, and stretching to the west and north so as to include Marylebone, Tyburnia and Kensington, Notting Hill, Bayswater and Westbourne Park, Kilburn, St. John’s Wood, and Hampstead. Upon these great and populous regions of London Methodism had little more than a nominal hold. Five chapels, two of them small ones, and little more than nine hundred members, with four ministers to occupy the pulpits

and take pastoral oversight of the congregations, constituted its whole strength in the midst of a population numbered by hundreds of thousands. The era of chapel-building and Church-extension had not yet begun.* Hinde Street Chapel itself, ugly and incommodious to the last degree, possessed good Methodist traditions, which were worthily sustained by the Society of that day. The Societies at St. John's Wood and Milton Street were smaller in number, and perhaps less vigorous and efficient. But the Circuit, as a whole, was a strong one, if only its utter disproportion to the surrounding population were left out of sight—strong in the character of its principal men and women, and in the hearty religious life of its members generally. The staff of ministers appointed at the Conference of 1858 was G. B. Macdonald, Thomas Llewellyn, W. M. Punshon, and Frederic Greeves. It may be doubted whether there was another circuit in the Connexion so strongly manned.

With the view of raising a congregation and consolidating the work at Bayswater, it was arranged, with the consent of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting and the hearty concurrence of his colleagues, that Mr. Punshon should preach once every Sunday in the Denbigh Road Chapel, instead of taking turns equally with his three colleagues according to custom. This arrangement, to which the parties concerned were agreed, gave rise in some quarters to unfavourable comment, and subsequently to an important discussion in the Conference. But it was justified from the

* On the ground which in 1858 constituted the Hinde Street Circuit there are in 1887 seven circuits, fourteen ministers, and three thousand members.

first by its success. The small congregation and Society of some sixty persons, which had hitherto worshipped in a hired upper room, had taken possession of a new chapel that would seat one thousand two hundred people. The neighbourhood was densely populated, but it was one where Methodism had no prescriptive right or influence, and where it was not enough to build a chapel and announce it as open for public worship. A congregation must be made, and that not from materials prepared to hand, but from the multitudes around who had no prepossessions in favour of Methodism and its ministries, and many prejudices against them. The means for "compelling them to come in" were found in Mr. Punshon's exceptional popularity. The success of the venture that was made will best be told in the words of the Rev. William Arthur, himself a chief promoter, almost the originator, of the great extension of Methodism in Bayswater.

"During his first residence in London I had ampler opportunities of judging of him as a preacher and pastor than are usually possessed by one minister in respect of another. He preached once every Sunday in Denbigh Road, and for the greater part of the time I was an habitual hearer, being myself unable to speak in public. It was said, 'You are building a cage, but where will you get the bird to sing in it?' But Providence sent the bird, and no sooner was that voice heard than the people flocked as doves to their windows. Each successive week seemed but to add to the eagerness of the crowds he attracted. They packed the seats, they filled every stair and nook and cranny; they stood compressed in every aisle. They comprised men of every rank and of every denomination. Attention was always unflagging, and at times it seemed as if the spirit of the orator had wound itself round the whole multitude as around a single man, and was hurrying it along in his own path. If many went away only to admire, not a few went away to repent and seek after God. Old pilgrims went away with uplifted heads, feeling enabled and impelled to 'urge their way with strength renewed.' The members of the Church steadily increased in number. It seemed as if those who were awakened under

his ministry were of a class to whom earnest preaching of the gospel was new, rather than of such as had been accustomed to a heart-searching ministry.

"The theological truths he presented were generally the fundamental ones, and were treated with great simplicity. His expositions of Scripture were neither elaborate nor recondite, but such as would be patent to any ordinary student. They were never far-fetched or fanciful; for with him the province for fancy to play in was by no means that of interpreting the Word of God. Reverently receiving that Word according to the most natural and best accredited expositions of it, he proceeded in his own manner to amplify and enforce its sacred lessons. He exulted in proclaiming the greatness of God's love to man, the boundless mercies of his gospel, and the redeeming sacrifice of Christ. 'What I most value in Punshon's preaching,' said to me a well-known Churchman who often heard him, 'is his setting-forth of the doctrine of the atonement;' and about the same time as this observation was made by a man of scholastic culture, a peasant from the north, after describing to me his congregation, added, 'Eh, but he was powerful on the blood.'

"His amplification, at some times laboured, was generally rich in a very high degree. Not unfrequently it was gorgeous, sometimes tremendous, and occasionally pathetic to a point at which an undefined and sudden thrill passed through the audience as through a single frame. Some of his hearers at Denbigh Road do not forget to this day the moment when, after having enlarged on the compassion of our glorified High Priest for His tempted and downcast followers, he suddenly subdued his tone, and with a note of strange sympathy and tenderness repeated the words, '*touched* with the feeling of our infirmities.' So vividly does the memory of that moment even now continue, that when in any cares or pains they look up for help to our ascended Lord, that word '*touched*' as then uttered seems to breathe over their spirits like a balm.

"In the case of Dr. Punshon, more than in that of any other minister I ever knew, one subsequently found more spiritual fruit of his sermons than at the time of their delivery the apparent impression on the congregation would have led one to expect. That impression seemed often to partake more largely of literary charm or of oratorical ascendancy than of soul-converting power. But the proof came after many days. Mr. Hull, one of the oldest and ablest ministers in the Irish Conference, said to me many months ago, 'In every Circuit of mine which he has visited, preaching occasional sermons, I have afterwards found his spiritual children, and that is more than I can say of any other of those very popular men who are celebrated for occasional sermons.' To this testimony I shall only add that in my own course I have very often met with his children in the gospel both on this side of the Atlantic and the other. Indeed, of sons in the gospel it has often seemed to me as if the Lord had granted to Dr.

Punshon a larger portion than even to many whose repute as winners of souls was not implicated with any fame for intellectual brilliancy. Those sons of his in the ministry are in Circuits at home, and in stations in Canada, the United States, and the Mission-field.

"In connection with his frequent absence from his own Circuit, which his occasional services in all parts of the country involved, one feature always struck me as peculiar. With many men, when such absences are frequent they render them almost useless for the affairs of the Circuit during the little time they may happen to spend in it. Somehow it was not so with him; he never lost the thread of home affairs, or seemed to overlook small details. He moved with so much speed and decision, that a day or two of his presence would count for more than many days of an ordinary man. His oratorical command was not more wonderful in great assemblies than was his patient power of detail in business meetings of the Church. Few indeed of those whose only gift is for business could transact it with so great accuracy, so great dispatch, or so much to the pleasure of others. Seen at one of his marvellous lectures, in a vast hall, surrounded by a waving throng, he would be taken for a giant woodman who lifted up the axe only on the tallest trees; but no cabinet-maker was more minute or dexterous, none fitted point to point with minuter or surer touch, than did he in arranging the sacred matters of business which are sometimes called secular. In such transactions he had a great art of saving time and sparing trials of temper; and of his rare gifts this was neither the least rare nor the least valuable.

"The rapidity just alluded to was not confined to the transaction of business. It seemed in him to take a peculiar form, and in combination with minuteness to constitute a very distinctive mark of his genius. It underlay all his mental operations, and determined the fleet current of his argument, and the speedily shifting character of his illustrations. It had very much to do with the estimate that many formed of his sermons, and also with the familiar complaint that they could not be remembered. Rapid in grasping conceptions, rapid in seeing analogies, rapid in linking relative to co-relative, rapid in affiliating feeling on thought, rapid in compressing many ideas into few words, rapid in reckoning, rapid in penning, and strangely rapid in utterance, his massive mind, laden with heavy weights, seemed hung on strangely agile springs. But in all this, and particularly in utterance, it was not with him as with many, 'the more haste the worse speed.' It was, on the contrary, tremendous speed and no tripping. Every syllable was clean cut, every word distinct as the stroke of a bell; and though the next stroke followed it instantly, and upon that came another and another and another, no two notes blurred on one another. This combined rapidity and minuteness appeared in almost all he did."

But Mr. Punshon's labours were not confined to the Bayswater portion of the Circuit; Hinde Street, St. John's Wood, Milton Street were visited in regular succession. At Hinde Street he was particularly happy, and nowhere was his ministry more successful in the best sense of the word. A correspondent, signing himself "*Hæc meminisse juvat*," furnishes some "recollections" which may supplement those of Mr. Arthur respecting Denbigh Road:—

"How well I remember the year 1858-9, surely the *annus mirabilis* of old Hinde Street, when Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Punshon, and Mr. Frederic Greeves were the Circuit-ministers. What a *Quaternion*! We said so to ourselves at the time, and I say it now with deepened feeling as I look back upon that fourfold ministry, which, in its variety and in its oneness, nourished and stimulated my eager youth. I was little more than a boy then, but I belonged to Hinde Street with all my heart, and Hinde Street belonged to me—'*quorum pars parva fui*.' Then, as now, I thought the old chapel ugly to a degree that was positively fascinating, but my love for it was never for a moment disturbed thereby. Mine was a spiritual, a dematerialized affection that pierced through the outward show of things to their inner beauty and lovableness. No device of architect and builder, working together in guilty confederacy, could have more successfully mortified the tastes of the worshippers; yet, at a fastidious age, with the critical faculty well awake, I walked about this Zion and told the towers thereof with serene and unassailable satisfaction. For me this grim piece of unimaginative brickwork enshrined sanctities and spiritual delights numberless and inexpressible. 'It nothing common had nor mean' in the round of its ordinances, the very absence of all outward picturesqueness only serving to set off other and deeper attractiveness. Perilous, perhaps, was the non-provision for the longings of the eye, the ear, and the not unlawful susceptibilities of the young, but happily atoned for by the wealth of influences, religious and intellectual, that centered there. On Sunday mornings I would climb the steep staircase, with its friendly rope in place of hand-rail, on my way to the sky-lighted vestry where the class met; and in the afternoons I dived down the cellar-steps which were the only approach to the schoolroom. During the morning service I kept watch over restless scholars in that wonderful upper gallery to which we of the Sunday School were relegated,—honourable banishment to giddy heights—where the voice of the preacher and the responses

of the people came up in gusts and snatches of which they who worshipped on lower levels knew nothing. But it was the evening service, teacher's duties and all pious police functions discharged for the day,—it was the evening service that brought the crown of all joys and blessings, when the ploughshare cut its deepest and the good seed fell into the good ground, when the showers descended and the rain also filled the pools.

“There were many of us young people to whom it was a joyous spring-time. The dew of our youth was upon us. The ‘years that bring the inevitable yoke’ were yet to come. The first delight of Christian life had not spent itself. In the work, the worship, the fellowship of the Church there was a freshness, a charm not to be described. And that dull, unlovely chapel was hearth and altar at once, the place where light and heat converged, and whence again they flowed out on many sides.

“For our ministers we had great love and unbounded admiration. There was little disposition among us to set one off against another ; and, indeed, there was no such inequality in respect of their pulpit powers as to encourage invidious comparisons. No four men who were entirely one in their aims and convictions could differ more widely in style, and in their modes of presenting truth ; but the ministry of each seemed to sustain and complete that of the others, and anything like ‘I am of Paul, and I of Apollos’ on the part of their hearers would have been no less foolish than unworthy. I do not presume to give a formal criticism, I am only recalling my youthful memories, when I say that whether it were Mr. Macdonald in the pulpit or Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Punshon or Mr. Greeves, we looked up and were fed, we came hungry and went away satisfied. Mr. Macdonald was then some fifty-three or four years of age, with the manners and appearance of genial authority, manly alike in thought and mode of utterance. He had lost, I suppose, some of the fire and brightness of his earlier style, but to us he appeared the very model of middle-aged ripeness, strong, well-balanced, full of broad sympathies and clear common sense. His noble voice and somewhat stately elocution impressed us greatly, and if his didactic strain was occasionally heavy, it was rescued and relieved by the felicity of his illustrations, and the skill with which he introduced a not too frequent anecdote. Mr. Llewellyn was perhaps more unequal than his colleagues, the difference between his ‘good times’ and his bad ones being more marked. He was always earnest and affectionate, and when his spirit was fairly aglow his impassioned appeals, full of solemnity and tenderness, seemed as though they must carry everything before them. Some of us thought that he especially excelled in addressing the young. If the junior minister of the four, who was still in his probation, had appeared to disadvantage among such colleagues it would have been but natural, and in no way a proof of inferiority. But in the case of Mr. Frederic Greeves this was not so. It was almost impossible to believe that he was a young preacher.

In knowledge, experience, style, delivery, he was far beyond his years. He might have been preaching all his life. Young he was in zest and buoyancy of spirit, and perhaps in certain literary tendencies and susceptibilities, but mature in all else. His sermons combined fulness of matter, clearness of arrangement, and a finished style. He also excelled as a reader and a speaker. Our standard of elocution at Hinde Street in those days was a high one. If under Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Punshon, and Mr. Greeves we became somewhat exacting in this matter, who shall blame us?

“So far as popularity was concerned, Mr. Punshon greatly distanced all the rest. When it was his turn to preach at Hinde Street, we had to be there betimes to gain admission. On a Sunday evening the crowd would begin to gather upon the chapel steps an hour before the time for service. By the time the doors were opened there was a compact mass of people in waiting, and sometimes a painful crush before they streamed freely into the aisles or trooped up the gallery stairs. Soon every pew was filled, and every coign of vantage occupied. When the preacher came out of the vestry it was often necessary to clear the pulpit steps of those who had taken possession of them, in order to allow him to pass. After a while, and not without difficulty, all were in their places; there was a general settling down, and perfect stillness as he gave out the first lines of the opening hymn. The congregations included all sorts and conditions of men. There were Methodists from various parts of London and from the country, religious people of all denominations, sight-seers, novelty-hunters, critics, wise men and simpletons of every degree. Sometimes the face of a well-known public character would be seen—actor, statesman, or Church dignitary. Men of the world would smile to meet each other in a place so unlikely as a Methodist chapel. His reading of the Scriptures never failed to fix the attention of the hearers. As he engaged in prayer with increasing freedom and fervour, responses would be heard, now singly, then in growing fulness and volume, while here and there an unaccustomed visitor would look round, half-amused, half-puzzled, to see what it meant, perhaps wishing himself well out of it. By-and-bye came the sermon. How well I remember his texts:—‘Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them and be clean?’ ‘Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead;’ ‘Whom have I in heaven but Thee?’ ‘He being dead yet speaketh,’ and many more.

“After the text was announced there was a kind of subdued rustling as of preparation and expectancy, a final adjustment of bodily and mental faculties, and then a silence that could be felt. At intervals of perhaps ten minutes there were breathing spaces, when, at the close of a division or period, the spellbound hearers had a brief release, and there was a movement, almost a murmur, through the congregation as of pent-up

emotion set free. There was a discharge of long-restrained coughs, a general drawing of breath and changing of position, until, after the short pause, the tension was renewed as the hearers passed again under the dominion of the preacher and his theme.

“There was undoubtedly in Mr. Punshon that kind of power which from its effect upon the sensibilities and emotions of a congregation has been called ‘magnetic,’ but his ministry at Hinde Street possessed a power above and beyond that of mere eloquence. He preached with ‘power from on high,’ that power by which souls are awakened, convinced of sin, and brought from death unto life. There were times when the congregation seemed overshadowed by the presence of the Lord, when the most careless were moved with awe, and Christian hearts were filled with the sweet and strong consolations of God. His yearning desire to bring sinners to Christ was in itself very affecting. To some of us it was a new revelation of the urgency and tenderness of the gospel itself. It seemed to say, ‘God is my record how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.’ In the prayer-meetings that often followed the evening service, his appeals would reach their climax of persuasiveness and affectionate entreaty. Nothing touched him more deeply than the presence of humble, sorrowful souls seeking the Lord. I have seen him pass from one to another, whispering words of counsel and direction, or offering short and earnest prayers, his face wet with tears and radiant with holy joy. At those never-to-be-forgotten times of blessing there was nothing of the masterful or self-confident in him, no self-assertion in his way of dealing with inquirers, but deep humility and reverence, a tender sympathy with souls, and great simplicity of faith towards God. We who were young at Hinde Street in the days of which I have been speaking were, perhaps, first drawn to Mr. Punshon by the eloquence of his ministry; but the strongest and most enduring influence he exercised upon us was due to qualities in that ministry still higher and more precious. There were those among us who ‘owed to him their own selves also.’”

It will be remembered that Mr. Punshon had accepted an invitation to become one of the ministers of the Spitalfields Circuit, and that this arrangement had been set aside on the ground of his wife’s state of health. This could not but be a great disappointment, as there were special circumstances in the case which made the loss of his services a very serious one. The chapels throughout the Circuit were burdened with debt. The case of Spitalfields

Chapel was aggravated by the fact that there were only three surviving trustees, and that of these only one, and he a man of limited means and non-resident, was willing to act. The congregation, which at one time was large and flourishing, was greatly reduced in numbers and resources. The income of the chapel was inadequate to the expenditure, and it was impossible to create a new trust, as persons could not be found to undertake the heavy responsibilities involved. In these very difficult circumstances the Rev. Robert Inglis, Superintendent of the Circuit, received permission from the Conference to solicit help throughout the Connexion, and he toiled bravely at his uphill task. The prospect of Mr. Punshon's help made the matter look more hopeful, and when it was found that it could not be had, the disappointment was proportionately severe. It says much for the good feeling of those concerned that they relinquished their claim upon him, "not grudgingly nor of necessity," but in a generous manner. Mr. Punshon was touched by the considerate kindness of his friends in the east of London, and determined to give them all the assistance in his power. With this object in view he prepared a lecture, by which he hoped to raise a considerable sum for the relief of the sorely burdened Circuit. The subject of the lecture was determined by the history of the Spitalfields Chapel. It was originally a French church, built for and used by the Protestant refugees who were driven from France by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. In 1819 it was purchased by the Methodists. Mr. Punshon's imagination was pleasantly kindled by this blending

of Huguenot and Methodist associations, and his lecture *The Huguenots* was the result.

He threw himself heartily into the studies which the subject required. The lecture gives evidence of considerable reading. It is longer, more elaborate, and contains a larger body of historic fact and biographic detail, than any of his previous lectures. Its literary quality is higher, though it is still an oration, not an essay. Perhaps the portraiture of the chief personages of the story—Coligny, Catherine de Medicis, Antoine de Bourbon, and Henry of Navarre—is the most striking characteristic. In these word-painted portraits many thought him at his best. In devoting his lecture on the Huguenots to the relief of the old Spitalfields Chapel Mr. Punshon did not offer that which cost him nothing. It was prepared in the intervals of frequent journeys, and amidst the great labours of his first months in London. It was begun in the most distressing days of his wife's illness, and finished during the dark and lonely weeks that followed her death. For the hope that had been revived by their removal to London was soon cast down by the appearance of worse symptoms, and the rapid progress of disease.

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"September 11th, 1858.—My experience has been very varied during the last two months. I have been often weighed down with anxiety and overmuch sorrow, and sometimes, for I would not be ungrateful, exalted with favour, and enriched with blessing. My dearest wife, the loved object of so much solicitude, still continues weak and poorly. By the providence of God we had a very happy Conference, and I have passed through all the partings from attached friends, and am in my new sphere of labour, living in an airy, open situation. I feel much about my entrance upon ministerial life in London, but God is all-sufficient, and I will try to trust Him for all.

"*October 2nd.*—I dare not have transcribed my feelings during the past ten days, I have been so racked with distrust, alarm, and anguish. My wife still very poorly. Mamma (Mrs. Vickers) quite confined to bed, and insensible. It is a long, dark night; surely the Lord in His merciful goodness will make the morning come by-and-bye.

"*October 6th.*—Yesterday we committed dear mamma to the grave. So one of our sufferers has languished into endless day. She was seized with paralysis on Sunday, and rapidly sank away. Thus the links to earth loosen. I dread the effect upon Maria of this new sorrow. I am striving for calm and patient trust, hopefully to believe that God will perform His Word unto His servant, upon which He hath caused me to hope.

"*October 23rd.*—God has graciously preserved me in journeyings, and I have returned in safety after one thousand three hundred miles' travel in Scotland, but alas! only to find my dearest wife visibly worse, and a very gloomy prognosis from the doctor respecting the future. He seems to consider her case well-nigh hopeless. Is it indeed to be so? Has a lying spirit been suffered to deceive me, or have I been allowed to mistake the wishes of my own heart for whispers from on high? It would seem that, in all human probability, she cannot recover, and my home is to be desolate, and my heart wrung, not only with the bitterness of death, but with disappointed hope, and trust, perhaps unwarranted, proved to be presumption.

"*October 30th.*—One or two seasons of deep *heathen* sorrow. I am trying for perfect resignation, praying for it, hoping to attain it, and do feel a measure of power to trust God with *all*. But I dare not brood over my circumstances or I should be unmanned. I want more personal holiness.

"*November 3rd.*—The dear sufferer is visibly wasting, and, I fear, sinking into the grave. This is indeed a bitterness, deep, prostrating, terrible. Oh! to see the wife of my youth going down to death, to watch the woful sufferings, and to be unable to help . . . but the Lord has promised to sustain.

"*November 6th.*—The doctor has now pronounced my wife's case absolutely hopeless, and she has become so rapidly worse that the fatal issue cannot be long delayed. She is calmly and happily resigned, and in her patient trust exemplifies the perfect power of godliness. This is indeed strong consolation under a trouble otherwise overwhelming.

"*November 9th.*—Had a very precious Sabbath communion with my dying wife. Felt very near heaven, and had strong consolation drafted into my soul. On the whole I am enabled to trust in God.

"*November 12th.*—The stroke has fallen. My precious Maria languished into life on the 10th of this dreary November at a quarter past four in the afternoon. Her death was painless. Sudden faintness seized her. 'This must be death,' she said. 'Going, going to glory!' and in ten minutes she was immortal, 'no more to groan, no more to die.' For her the change

is glorious, but for me, alas! for me! . . . For myself the future is dark, unknown, fathomless; but he that walketh in darkness must stay himself upon his God.

"*November 13th.*—This day I have committed my precious dust to its resting-place. . . . I have consecrated myself afresh to the great work to which God has called me. My darling children are very interesting and affectionate. God gives me comfort in them amid my grief and trouble.

"*December 4th.*—Have this night arrived at home after three weeks' sojourn in Devonshire and in Sheffield. Though I have had 'tears to drink in great measure,' I have had abundant consolation in the precious promises, of which sympathising friends have reminded me, and in my own approaches to the throne of grace. I have felt inexpressibly in first preaching the gospel of God since my loss, but my determinations are strong for the Saviour and His service, and I pray that out of this seven-fold-heated furnace I may emerge into a mightier and more successful ministry. . . . My dear little Fanny's birthday. Lord, sanctify her sweet disposition by Thy Holy Spirit.

"*December 27th.*—Still in infirm health, harassed by returns of an old and very depressing pain. It seems my lot still to suffer. I cannot read God's purposes, but can trust that they are wise and kind. Greater sense of my loss yesterday, or rather on Saturday, than I have felt before. The first Christmas Day without my precious Maria. Everything seems to remind me of my sorrow.

"*January 8th, 1859.*—The services of the Watch-night and the Covenant were both blessed to my soul, though during the former I was in considerable pain. A very exciting service in St. James's Hall on Sunday evening. It is no small privilege to declare the truth to some three thousand people at once. May God keep me faithful! 'Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe; draw me, and I will run after Thee.'

"*January 15th.*—Sickness still in our family circle; children ailing, Fanny V. weakly and delicate, and Jane, our servant, confined to bed with what seems to be the beginning of a serious illness. The pride and worldliness are not trampled out yet. Lord! in judgment, remember mercy.

"*February 7th.*—Again a sufferer; intense pain in the face, and boils. Wish I could feel less impatient under the strokes of the chastising hand. Unable to do my work to-night, got through yesterday with great difficulty.

"*February 12th.*—Better able to work again, and very thankful to be so engaged. Some sense of loneliness cheered by remembrances of my beloved's happiness in the better world, and of my own usefulness here. Finished my lecture on 'The Huguenots,' prayed earnestly in the train to-day that it might be a blessing to thousands, and no snare to me."

The lecture, prepared during the darkest weeks of his life, bears no trace of the shadows that hung so heavily upon him. There is nothing morbid in the sentiment, no falling away from the healthy, hopeful strain of his teaching. It is probable, indeed, that the labour of composition brought relief, that in the selecting and grouping of materials, in shaping his periods and giving finish to his sketches, he found respite from his sorrow :—

“For the unquiet heart and brain
A use in measured language lies ;
The sad mechanic exercise,
Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.”

It was delivered on Friday, February 18th, 1859, in the old chapel at Spitalfields, a place consecrated by Huguenot traditions. The building was crowded to its utmost capacity, and when, after nearly two hours of unbroken sway over the audience, he resumed his seat, it was felt that the reputation established by his previous lectures, *The Prophet of Horeb*, and *John Bunyan*, was carried to a higher level, and placed upon a still surer basis.

Perhaps, when the hearers had recovered from what many called the enchantment of the time, and recalled the brilliant or moving passages by which they had been borne along, his recitation of Macaulay's *Ivry*, and the portrait of Catherine de Medicis, stood out above all else. Through the clanging stanzas of the former they heard the drums and trappings of the battle, the thunder of the captains and the shouting ; while as they looked upon the latter a chill seemed to fall upon the audience, and freeze all hearts with abhorrence and dread.

PORTRAIT OF CATHERINE DE MEDICIS.

"Remorseless without cruelty, and sensual without passion—a diplomatist without principle, and a dreamer without faith—a wife without affection, and a mother without feeling—we look in vain for her parallel. See her in her oratory! Devouter Catholic never told his beads. See her in the cabinet of Ruggieri the astrologer! Never glared fiercer eye into Elfland's glamour and mystery; never were philtre and potion (alas! not all for healing) mixed with firmer hand. See her in the council-room! Royal caprice yielded to her commanding will; soldiers faltered beneath her glance who never blenched at flashing steel; and hoary-headed statesmen, who had made politics their study, confessed that she outmatched them in her cool and crafty wisdom. See her in disaster! More philosophical resignation never mastered suffering; braver heroism never bared its breast to storm. Strange contradictions are presented by her which the uninitiated cannot possibly unravel. Power was her early and her lifelong idol, but when within her grasp she let it pass away, enamoured rather of the intrigue than of the possession; a mighty huntress, who flung the game in largess to her followers, finding her own royal satisfaction in the excitement of the chase. Of scanty sensibilities, and without natural affection, there were times when she laboured to make young lives happy—episodes in her romantic life during which the woman's nature leaped into the day. Toiling constantly for the advancement of her sons, she shed no tear at their departure, and sat intriguing in her cabinet, while an old blind bishop and two aged domestics were the only mourners who followed her son Francis to the tomb. Sceptical enough to disbelieve in immortality, she was prudent enough to provide, as she imagined, for any contingency; hence she had her penances to purchase heaven, and her magic to propitiate hell. Queenly in her bearing, she graced the masque or revel, smiling in cosmetics and perfumes; but Vicenza daggers glittered in her boudoir, and she culled for those who crossed her schemes flowers of exquisite fragrance, whose odour was death. Such was Catherine de Medicis, the sceptred sorceress of Italia's land, for whom there beats no pulse of tenderness, around whose name no clinging memories throng, on whom we gaze with a sort of constrained and awful admiration, as upon an embodiment of power, but power cold, crafty, passionless, cruel—the power of the serpent, which cannot fail to leave impressions on the mind, but impressions of basilisk eye, and iron fang, and deadly grip, and poisonous trail."

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"*February 19th.*—Delivered my lecture to a very crowded house in old Spitalfields last evening. Very much exhausted at the close, but amply repaid by the feeling elicited and displayed. Wept bitter tears, though, I trust, without repining, as I thought that one who would have listened

lovingly 'was not.' My Marah-fountain seemed opened afresh. My precious wife! Oh! may I live for the heaven to whose wealth she has contributed. I pray that I may be strengthened in the delivery of this lecture, and saved from elation of spirit through the often undeserved applause of those who hear me."

During the next two months the lecture was re-delivered to large and eager audiences in London, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Bristol, and elsewhere. Three days after its delivery at Spital-fields he gave it in Hinde Street Chapel, a week later in Belfast, two days afterwards in Liverpool, and the following week in St. James's Hall, London. Lord Shaftesbury was in the chair, there were three thousand three hundred persons present, and the net proceeds exceeded £200.

It was a memorable occasion, memorable even among many similar triumphs. The audience was by no means limited to Methodists, or to Nonconformists. It included persons of nearly every rank and class, but fused by a common enthusiasm. The rigid features of the chairman relaxed, and on his usually immobile countenance were seen the signs of strong emotion. At the close, when the whirlwind of applause had died away, an anti-climax was forthcoming. A letter was handed to Mr. Punshon in the committee-room from an Essex clergyman, and was something to this effect:—

"That the writer understood that the gentleman he addressed was a public lecturer; that they wanted a lecture at the Mechanics' Institute in his village, and wished him to come; that he did not know his fee, but if he would come and lecture, he could promise him that his travelling expenses should be paid, and that they would find him a bed at the 'Swan.'"

The exertion involved in these efforts was very great. They did not take the place of his ordinary

engagements, but were in addition to them. The week after lecturing at St. James's Hall he preached twice in London, once in Manchester, twice at Bridgewater, lectured in Plymouth and Bristol, and spoke in St. James's Hall at a meeting of the Young Men's Christian Association. The following week, besides preaching in London and Nottingham, he lectured on three successive evenings at Sheffield, York, and Leeds.

The excessive strain began to tell on mind and body, but there was no relaxing.

“March 27th.—Another week of journeyings, and of high excitement. . . . Feel poorly in body; convinced that I am doing too much, but mind for the most part calm. Felt deeply on the occasion of my first public visit to Leeds, and the sight of some old friends was almost overwhelming. Fear lest the active should leave no room for the contemplative. I want to dwell more in thoughts of holiness and God.

“April 2nd.—Much perturbed this week by bringing up with coughing a small quantity of blood. Felt alarmed when I considered the multitude of engagements which I have yet on hand, and anxious, if it be God's will, to work yet longer in His service. Feel convinced that I have been doing too much. The physical and mental strain has been continuous and intense, and added to the sorrows of my lot, and the anxieties which I cannot tell the world, they have almost worn me down. May God strengthen me during the next few weeks.

“May 14th.—Finished on Thursday evening the delivery of my lectures. Exeter Hall was full, and I felt very thankful when the whole affair was over. God has mercifully blessed me with more strength and less elation than I expected. To the glory of His grace I ascribe the success of the lecture, and on His altar I lay it.”

The work he had set himself to do was accomplished. He had raised a thousand pounds for the old chapel at Spitalfields. It was a generous gift, ungrudged and free, and the bestowal brought him joy. What it had cost him he partly knew from the alternate strain and reaction that accompanied and

followed each effort. But he did not care to count very closely his spending of himself.

“The lore
Of nicely-calculated less or more”

had no attraction for him. But the cost of this and many another labour of love was reckoned against him, and exacted to the full in after years in shattered nerves and broken spirits, in languid days and sleepless nights.

“*May 28th.*—The eve of my birthday. If God spares me till the morrow I shall have completed my thirty-fifth year. If last year was eventful, how much more of history has been crowded into this! I have been a mourner over many tombs, and have passed through my life’s deepest sorrow. But I will sing of mercy and of judgment. Take my heart, my whole heart, and brighten it, and shape it for Thyself, O Lord.

“*June 12th.*—Another of my anniversaries. My mother! thou art before me now. Oh! may my, perhaps morbid, observance of times and seasons at any rate lead me to solemn thought and holy purpose.

“*July 9th.*—Much engaged during this week in the examination of the young men who offer as candidates for the ministry. Cheered by the promise of a bright succession of faithful ministers of the Gospel. We have recommended seventy-seven out of eighty-two who were before us. Alas! the thought humbles me how small the improvement that I have made in the fourteen years that have elapsed since I was a candidate. Poor Leppington, who was with us on Tuesday in the committee, apparently in perfect health, suddenly called away. Oh for grace to improve by all the admonishings of Providence!

The Conference of 1859 was held in Manchester under the presidency of Dr. Waddy. At the previous Manchester Conference, in 1849, Mr. Punshon was ordained. This year he had the honour of being elected, on the nomination of Dr. Osborn, at the earliest date that he was eligible, a member of “the Legal Hundred.”

It has been already stated that the special arrangement in the Hinde Street Circuit, under which

Mr. Punshon was appointed to preach once on each Sunday in Bayswater Chapel, had been unfavourably regarded in certain quarters. This slight modification of the itinerancy within itinerancy of a Methodist preacher's life, was looked upon as ominous of serious changes in connexional procedure. If one of four ministers in a Circuit be allowed, for such ends as the raising of a congregation or building up of a church, to devote, say, a third of his labours instead of a fourth to the people amongst whom he is set down, will not the larger itinerancy from Circuit to Circuit be imperilled, and, generally speaking, everything that is established and settled be put in jeopardy? Such a question could not be allowed to remain unanswered; and, accordingly, the whole subject was brought under discussion in the Conference by a resolution, moved by the Rev. S. R. Hall, to the effect that "the system of Methodist itinerancy, whereby the several ministers of a Circuit regularly and equally interchange, must be retained in all its integrity, and that in any special and exceptional case in which it may be deemed expedient in any wise to modify the itinerant system, the formal approval of the Conference must be previously obtained." It was understood from the first, and made clear by the debate that followed, that the case of Bayswater was particularly referred to.

Mr. Hall's action in the matter must not be mistaken. It was characteristically conscientious, straightforward, and fearless. Towards Mr. Punshon it was impossible for him to have other than the kindest feeling. And this was cordially returned.

In Mr. Hall's judgment, the Bayswater arrangement was a "tampering" with the connexional system of Methodism. He did not question the *bona fides* of those who were responsible for it, but he saw, or thought he saw, the indication of tendencies that might run on to lamentable results. The suburbs would be petted and the town centres starved. Popular men would be told off to minister to the rich, and the poorer sort would be neglected. Moreover, class interests would arise among the preachers. There would be "fancy" preachers standing aloof from their brethren, and, in consequence, a divided ministry. He feared this novelty was a concession to the spirit of the age. Mr. Hall then proceeded to speak of the rage for a certain kind of popularity. Disclaiming any personal reference in his remarks, he added :—

"There is an amount of religious confectionery dealt out in some places truly sickening. A man gets up, dressed in the newest fashion ; after exhausting himself with giving out two or three stanzas of our noble hymns, he throws himself back in a corner of the pulpit, takes out his cambric handkerchief, sips water, and prepares to deal out certain fancies which will tickle amazingly, concludes with a bit of poetry, and then sits down under overwhelming amazement on the part of the people."

At this point, in reply to a request from the President that he would confine himself to the question, Mr. Hall added :—

"I was not referring to our own men ; if it made that impression I am sorry for it. But it will be a sad day for Methodism when we allow our rich men to coax our younger and more popular ministers to outward places, locating them by themselves, and possibly bringing about that which is a humiliation and a shame."

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Naylor.
Mr. Macdonald replied :—

“With the greater part of Mr. Hall’s general assertions he was able to agree. But he must state the facts of the case so far as Bayswater was concerned. ‘Three years ago I found that the members of the Society, diminished to some forty or fifty, were worshipping in an upper room, in a most incommodious place. Through the exertions and influence of Mr. Arthur, land had been secured in a very eligible position for the erection of a new chapel, and the intention was to build a chapel to contain one thousand two hundred people, and entirely free from debt. We raised £4,500 ; in due time we opened the chapel. We transferred to it our little congregation of about sixty persons. The chapel is surrounded by a population such as we might reasonably expect that Methodism could influence for good. I conversed with Mr. Arthur and my colleagues, and when we had the prospect of obtaining a fourth minister, and that minister Mr. Punshon, it did occur to us that the way to produce a powerful impression would be to avail ourselves of a name so well known as that of Mr. Punshon in order to excite public attention. Whether our reasons were valid or invalid, they were exclusively our own. They were not suggested to us. So far as I know, there was never a reference to this subject made to me by a single layman ; and I may take the opportunity of stating that a wealthy member of our Circuit, resident in Bayswater, was perhaps the most unwilling of all the individuals I conversed with to accede to the proposal. It was only in deference to the very urgent opinion I expressed on the subject, as to the value it would be to Methodism, that he acceded. . . . In the ordinary course, that which I presume Mr. Hall considers desirable, Mr. Punshon would be one day in five in Bayswater Chapel, or ten times in the fifty weeks. Taking into consideration necessary absence owing to Conference and other engagements, we could not reckon on more than eight times. I laid this matter fairly before the Quarterly Meeting. I stated what my views were, and said, “Let us try by way of experiment whether we cannot at once secure a congregation.” . . . We tried the experiment of appointing Mr. Punshon one Sunday in the morning and the next in the evening, in regular alternation ; the week-nights we took regularly in turn with him, and he took all the other places on Sundays and week-nights in succession. Now let me state the results. The Bayswater Society has more than doubled during the year. We commenced with sixty, we have now one hundred and forty. We have an income from the chapel exceeding, I believe, £200 a year. The chapel is in circumstances to allow us £70 a year to the quarterly board ; the contributions of the Society have so increased as to defray the entire expenses of a married minister. The arrangement has been a great and signal success.’ By itinerancy Mr. Macdonald understood that which was defined by the Poll Deed, that no minister should be appointed for more than three successive years to one chapel. He did not understand it to signify that all the preachers within all Circuits should rotate exactly,

numerically, geographically. That principle of exact rotation had in various ways been departed from, and he trusted that the Conference would not interfere with the elasticity of Methodism, with its power of adapting itself to peculiar local circumstances."

Mr. Arthur followed in a long and animated speech, in the course of which he said :—

"In my view there has been no home missionary in your body like William Morley Punshon. No man has so thoroughly broken up new ground and done God's work by bringing people, from the highest ranks to the lowest, under the influence of Methodist preaching. An experiment has been made ; God has greatly blessed it ; the people are content ; there is a new work begun ; the neighbourhood is feeling it, and if you will give me five men of the right kind to make similar experiments with, I will guarantee you five congregations. Mr. Hall says this is leaving the masses. Leaving the masses ! when you go where there are some hundred thousand people without a Methodist chapel in the midst of them ! On the system of driving five men round and round, and making a man appear once in eight weeks in the same pulpit, what is the condition of your old chapels among the masses ? Do they flourish ? Do they fill ? Do you attach your families to them ? For a scattered population the principle is, Spread a man's labours over the widest surface you can ; but for thickly populated districts the principle is, Concentrate them. . . . I am profoundly convinced that for carrying out a home mission in the great towns to which our population is more and more converging, we must have a greater concentration of each minister's energies than is possible on the plan of equal interchange, with often four or five men in a circuit. . . . Then, as to 'the spirit of the age,' 'fancy' preaching, and so on, I totally disagree with Mr. Hall. I regret that he should have given us that beautiful sketch of the young gentleman with the cambric handkerchief, and so on, which really was a *fancy* sketch so far as Methodism is concerned. . . . I say that the spirit of our age is not for flash men, but for *earnest* men. The cry is, 'Give us men that preach as if they meant what they said.'"

Dr. Dixon moved the previous question :—

"I hope you will not put another rule on that book the effect of which would be to cripple the freedom of your superintendents. A good deal has been said about concentrating efforts. During my whole life I have desired the occupancy of a place where I could concentrate my exertions, where I could harmonise (if I may dignify it with the term) my teaching, and deliver in a series of discourses the great truths and doctrines of

Christianity. But what are the facts of the case? I have been three years in this Manchester First Circuit; I shall leave it in two or three weeks, and in point of fact I shall have been the preacher of my own place, Ebenezer, less than three-quarters of a year. That is the effect of your diffusive, rotatory system. I go round and round, and have been doing this for almost fifty years. I like this Bayswater experiment. I like testing principles. I like going a little out of the old routine. . . . We have all one end. It is, if I understand rightly, to promote this glorious work of God. But if you subject Methodism to routine, depend upon it your routine will not be a jot better than routine is everywhere else."

The debate was continued at great length and with much ability. Finally, Mr. Scott appeared to speak the mind of the Conference:—

"I wish not to put any fetters upon the free working of our system. I agree with Mr. Arthur and Mr. Macdonald that there has been an elasticity in Methodism from the beginning which has adapted itself amazingly to circumstances, while it has retained its fundamental principles in all their integrity. It is my decided opinion that you should leave matters as they are, and not make any rule to fetter us on the right hand or the left."

With this opinion the Conference agreed.

The original resolution and the amendments of Dr. Dixon and Mr. Rigg were then withdrawn, and the discussion closed.

It has been referred to at greater length than might seem necessary, first, from its importance in relation to Mr. Punshon's ministry, and second, because it has a not remote bearing on some questions in which Methodism is deeply interested to-day.

During the session of the Conference a devotional meeting was held in the Free Trade Hall. The remarkable revivals of religion that had taken place in Great Britain and Ireland, in America, and various parts of the Continent of Europe, were

attracting much attention in the Churches, and it was thought desirable to bring the subject before the Methodists of Manchester. Arrangements were made which resulted in one of the largest and most impressive meetings ever held in connection with the Conference. Mr. Punshon delivered the closing address :—

“There seems to be nothing I can do, having no special mission to report, but to endeavour in a few words to impress upon you, if I can, some of the emotions which have thrilled me, and the conclusions to which I have been led in the course of this evening. I agree with those who have testified to a widespread feeling, and deep, earnest expectancy of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. I have felt it everywhere ; I have met with it in all my journeyings throughout the past year, I have remarked upon it as the most hopeful sign of the coming blessing ; and the person who mixes much with religious society, and is not conscious of that deep feeling, might be addressed almost as the Saviour was addressed by the disciples as they went to Emmaus, ‘ Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and knowest not the things which are come to pass there in these days ? ’ The very restlessness of society, the upheaval, the clamour, the strife of passion, and the conflict of opinion, all the tossing and turbulence of the peoples, seem to show one thing,—the Macedonian cry is become the world-cry, ‘ Come over and help us. ’ They tell of the beating of the world’s great heart, seeking for something which it has not, and that something to be found only in God. . . . We are satisfied that nothing will meet the great expectation but an outpouring of the Holy Spirit of God, a widespread revival of pure religion. Some tell us that the Gospel has grown old, that it is no longer suited to the masses of mankind, that if we would grasp the people we must seek for other appliances more congenial to the spirit of the age. No ! let the old Gospel be more keenly felt and inwardly digested by ourselves. The revivals that have taken place in Ireland, America, and our own country prove to us that there is no human heart anywhere unfitted for the Gospel of Christ ; that there is a constant and underlying affinity between the imperishable seed and the soil into which we cast it ; that in all geographical conditions, and in all varieties of temperature, the seed can live and grow ; and that the preaching of the old Gospel which saved our fathers, which has saved ourselves, without addition, without retrenchment, without perversion, is ordained and is sufficient for the conversion of the world.

“ Oh for more power ! Oh for the descent of the Holy Ghost to

baptize us, and to renew our commissions afresh ! As I think of the glorious deeds of former times, as I look at the eminent men on my right hand who still linger among us, survivors of a past generation, men who sit upon the summit of their honoured age, and are so much nearer heaven, I am almost ready to say to them, ‘ My fathers, teach us the secret of your power ; oh ! show us that follow in this holy ministry our feebleness, our impotence over conscience and over men ; show us the reason of our Sabbaths without result, and sermons without souls ; send us to our studies to reflect, and to our closets to pray.’ ”

The amen with which he concluded was taken up at once by thousands of voices, and repeated again and again with profound feeling. The hymn,—

“ Oh that the world might taste and see
The riches of His grace ! ”

was then sung, and the Rev. John Rattenbury offered the concluding prayer. It was a meeting remembered by many to this day.

Returning home he wrote :—

“ *August 13th, 1859.*—The Conference which I have attended will be among the most memorable ones of my life,—memorable for its freedom of debate, for its unbroken harmony, and for the eminently spiritual influence which has been felt in connection with its various services. A grand meeting in the Free Trade Hall, four thousand persons present, to listen to purely spiritual statements, and to pour out their supplications for the coming blessing. It was a gracious and hallowed time. Humbled on account of my own unfaithfulness, but stimulated to devote myself afresh and entirely to God. Humbled again by my election, at the earliest possible period, and in a manner singularly honourable, into the ‘ *Legal Hundred.*’ If before men I am gratified, and not insensible to kindness and esteem, before God, the Searcher of hearts, I bow in deeper contrition and more unfeigned abasement than ever. ‘ *Raise a fallen child of man.*’ How strangely has God answered this prayer in me ! ”

CHAPTER VII.

1859—1861.

LONDON, BAYSWATER. *Aged 35 to 37.*

Journal.—Letter to Mr. Ridgill.—Ill-health and Depression.—Lecture : *Daniel in Babylon*.—Last Sermon at Bayswater.—Course of Sermons on “The Prodigal Son.”—Pastoral Sympathy.

As soon as the Conference was over Mr. Punshon took a short holiday. For the first time he visited the Continent. It was but a flying visit—Paris, Geneva, Chamouny, and back in London again in eight days. But it was the revelation to him of a new pleasure, one to which in later years he had frequent recourse, much to his bodily and mental refreshment. The day after reaching home he crossed to Ireland, preached in Dublin and Cork, and spent a day or two at Killarney. It was well to draw breath and quiet his nerves before entering upon another year's work.

JOURNAL.

“*September 10th.*—A thousand thanks to the God of Providence and grace for His care of me and mine. Since my last entry I have been preserved in journeying both by land and water, have gazed upon the works of God in their sublimest forms, and have seen sights of beauty and grandeur which will be memories to my soul for ever. I have adored, I trust, while I have seen the wonderful works of God ; and now, at the beginning of another year of hallowed toil, I solemnly consecrate myself unto God. Great Father, accept and bless Thy erring but loving child.

"September 17th.—Cheered by hearing of one who was enabled to rejoice in Christ Jesus under my sermon at Richmond on Monday.

"September 24th.—Humbled and quickened last night at Worthing by the calm trust and fatherly counsels of dear Mr. Bossey, himself the very shadow of a man, prostrated by long affliction, but a triumphant saint waiting for the coming of his Lord. Strong as is my love of life, I felt in that sick room that I could almost have changed places with him to possess that conquering trust undisturbed by the shadow of a cloud. He impressed me deeply by regarding my election into 'The Hundred' as the commencement of a new era in my life,—no longer the preacher, but the pastor, the father of the people. My God, impress me with the responsibility and make me worthy.

"October 22nd.—Another blessed week. God greatly humbled and honoured me on Sabbath last at Hinde Street. Nearly thirty were in distress for sin. I find, after all, that this is my chief joy. A delightful meeting of office-bearers on Monday evening. All seemed to catch the hallowed fire, and to be preparing for the coming blessing. The Lord help me to labour and pray both for inward holiness and large usefulness to men. The Fords in trouble. Mrs. Scott, of Colombo, who sailed only twelve months ago, called suddenly to her reward. Every house has its days of weeping, and why should I repine as though I were the only stricken one!

"November 5th.—In journeyings much sustained, and blessed in declaring God's good Word. Mrs. Airey released from suffering, and Mrs. George Smith, of Leeds. Need a more perpetual government of my tongue. Have had occasionally to mourn for unadvised speaking, and to pray to be delivered from the sins of the lips. The shadow of my trouble looms upon me, for next week will be my saddest anniversary. 'Great Comforter, descend!'

"November 10th.—My anniversary! A year has rolled away since my life's great loss overtook me. My ever-remembered Maria has been a year in heaven. But she reckes not of time. It is mine to husband and improve it. Mid much weeping have felt strong consolation; though I have mourned that on one or two occasions my grief has seemed to embitter me.

"November 19th.—Sorely depressed and troubled for a while by a letter which appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* charging me with pirating a sermon of Dr. Greenwood's, of America. An untrue charge! but humbled both for present deficiency and for the remembrance of the misapplied past. Fanny still sorely coughing. Her delicate health a continual trial of faith and patience.

"November 26th.—Low and harassed during the week. The republication in the *Watchman* of the *Guardian* matter troubled me not a little. A sweet season at Whitstable last night, and a subduing and heavenly

conversation with brother James Smith, of Rochester, which did my heart good."

The charge of plagiarism brought against Mr. Punshon in the columns of the *Manchester Guardian* went the round of the newspaper press. It could not fail to wound and distress him. His reply was a denial of the charge, and he at once forwarded the manuscript of his sermon to the editor of the *Guardian*, challenging a comparison with the printed discourse of Dr. Greenwood. The editor accepted the office of referee, and published the following decision :—

"We have carefully perused Mr. Punshon's sermon on Deut. viii. 2, and a sermon of Dr. Greenwood's on Psalm cxliii. 5, pointed out to us as that of which the rev. gentleman is alleged to have unfairly availed himself. Our judgment upon the matter is that the charge of plagiarism is wholly without foundation. Between the train of thought in one section of Mr. Punshon's discourse and that of the whole of Dr. Greenwood's sermon, there is about as much similarity as might be expected between writers treating of the office of memory from a religious point of view. To this resemblance, such as it is, ample justice is done by describing it, in Mr. Punshon's words, as the legitimate result of reading and recollection ; and our opinion is that the grave accusation conveyed in the assertion that the two compositions contained 'the same divisions, the same argument, and the same beautiful language' has been very groundlessly preferred.—Ed. *Guardian*."

The year 1859—1860 was comparatively uneventful with Mr. Punshon. His round of labour was unceasing, save when occasionally interrupted by sickness. He lectured but little during the year, and prepared no new lecture. His strength was mainly given to preaching, and for this purpose, in addition to his work in London, he visited more than sixty towns in England and Wales. He also addressed some twenty-five missionary meetings. Besides his

great sorrow, the shadow of which returned upon him again and again, the delicate health of his little daughter caused him almost constant anxiety. The troubles of some of his relatives were added to his own share of griefs, so that he was heavily weighted. But there was no slackening in his work, and, in particular, no faltering in the urgent, hortatory character of his preaching. It was never more successful in bringing souls to Christ than at this time, and in the joy of such sowing and reaping he had abundant consolation amid his sorrows.

JOURNAL.

"January 1st, 1860.—All thanks and praise to the merciful God who has permitted the light of another year to dawn upon me. It begins upon the Sabbath. May this be prophetic of great spiritual blessing. Felt humbled to the dust last evening at the special service at Mr. Stoughton's chapel. Never felt so thankful for the precious blood of Christ, and realised its power. Lord Macaulay has died suddenly during the week. Genius could not save him, any more than mechanical skill could save Brunel and Stephenson, or science Humboldt, or literary ability De Quincey and Washington Irving, or saintly piety John Angell James,—all of whom during the year have been reaped by the great destroyer. I begin this year with solemn vows, determined by God's help to renew my covenant heartily, to war against fretfulness, vanity, impurity, repining, unbelief, and all other sins that do so easily beset me.

"January 7th.—A heart-searching sermon on Sunday from Mr. Arthur, a solemn Covenant-service, an awakening hour at night. Upwards of thirty gave in their names to decide for God. Bless the Lord for a good beginning to the year.

"January 21st.—A week of mercy. Preserved in journeying, and kept comparatively free from the power of evil. Thankful to hear of Mrs. P. having found peace with God, and to receive several letters from inquirers after salvation.

"January 28th.—Absent from home all the week, and privileged uninterruptedly to work for God. Saw the blessed effects of the revival in Newcastle and Sunderland, and renewed pleasantly the intercourse of former years with friends at Carlisle. My own soul for the most part breathing after God; on one or two occasions intensely desirous of a closer fellowship, though again humbled by my faithlessness.

“February 11th.—There seems an indication of God’s presence and power in the Churches in a very remarkable manner. A midnight meeting held on Thursday was attended by two hundred and fifty of the poor fallen girls of Regent Street and the Haymarket, twenty-five of whom wished to go into Asylums.

“March 17th.—Shocked and startled on Sabbath morning by the news of the sudden death of dear Mr. Corderoy of High Street, our foremost man in this Circuit, struck down almost in a moment while engaged in business at Woolwich. How awfully admonitory to us who remain ! For him a glorious change.”

LETTER TO REV. R. RIDGILL.

“March 17th, 1860.

“I don’t know how much you know of me, so that I may tell you news which is no news ; but this letter, so long delayed, is now fairly started, and must be finished to-night, for each day seems to bring its own ‘tale’ of work, and the hours are all too short. You have heard, I gather from your letter, that I have been deeply stricken, and that I mourn the wife of my youth. It is a passage in my history on which I do not care to dwell, for I have to remember sore struggles for resignation, and many seasons of deep, heathenish sorrow. To her the change was glorious ; I could not have wished an easier or a happier deathbed. You told me in your last that you rejoiced over me with trembling. Just listen to what I have had to humble me. For the three years previous to my wife’s death I never had the doctor out of my house ; for the last six years I have not been out of mourning. I have had to suffer my share of family troubles, in some cases to mourn over misconduct. Father-in-law, mother-in-law, grandfather, Uncle Henry, several other uncles, aunts, and cousins, and, in my own home, my wife and two children, have been taken from me. The waves have rolled over a stranded heart sometimes. But I praise God notwithstanding, and did praise Him even in my depth. I am never sanguine about my own experience, but my desires are after God, and I can truly say I am spoiled for any other service. I think, moreover, that He has shown me the proper worth of men’s applause. I have passed through a novitiate of popularity, sensible of but little elation, I dare not say of none, and longing always to retain my old affectionateness. I would a thousand times rather be loved than admired. My wife’s sister is with me, and will remain, God willing. I have four little ones—Fanny Morley, the eldest, and my only girl, a delicate creature who has not outgrown her croup tendencies yet, though she is nine years old. She is sharp, lively, intelligent, old-fashioned. My eldest boy, John William Vickers, is at boarding-school, and I heard from his master on Wednesday that he has just begun Greek. He is a wonderful arithmetician, and has every sort of sense but common sense, and I hope that will

be given by-and-bye. Morley is a curly-headed, handsome, affectionate lad, whose development is remarkably slow, perhaps the surer for that, but hitherto he has not shown himself brilliant. The youngest, Percy Henry, is a fine, arch, intelligent, self-willed lad, as he says, 'half and a three years old.' I am blessed in my children, and their affectionate and winning ways have often recalled me from my sorrows.

"I have more to do than I know how to accomplish. For the last three years I have averaged 14,000 miles a year in my evangelistic journeys, and am toiling hard to bring souls to Christ, and then to Methodism, as the purest and best administration of truth and godly discipline that I know. We are a few of us, young men, rising into influence in the Connexion. We have some grand men among us,—Arthur, *facile princeps* in most things, Gregory, Gervase Smith, Coley, Roberts, Rigg (for writing), M. C. Osborn, Fred Greeves, Tweddle, Sharr, Bush, G. S. Rowe, Piggott, John Moore, Workman, Josiah and Theo. Pearson,—all these among the younger men are men of mark in their way. We have the Conference in London this year. Opinion is much divided about the Presidency. Some think Stamp will get it; Hoole, Osborn, Thornton, Rattenbury, Prest, Macdonald, all are named. I suppose you know I sit on the platform as one of the Conference letter-writers, and have the Financial Secretaryship of the London District, and, what I like better, the Secretaryship to the Committee for the examination of candidates for the ministry. Altogether, but that I want more grace, I am very well contented with my lot, and hope to live and die a brotherly Methodist preacher.

"Do you write verse now? I have no time for anything but making sermons. Isn't it like me to write on these fragments of paper, and those upside down? Well, the heart is right after all, and it beats very tenderly for my old friend. God bless you, dear Hardrie, and your wife and bairns."

JOURNAL.

"*March 24th.*—Disquieted a little by the persevering republication of my sermons, some that I would fain withdraw from circulation. Much encouraged by an increase of seventy-seven in the Circuit this quarter, and ninety-two on trial. This is the highest good.

"*April 14th.*—Poor George Gaskell, of Leeds, suddenly snatched away, just my age. Father Chappell gathered also home. Lord, teach me to live in habitual preparation.

"*April 28th.*—Much shocked and grieved by the case of my dear friend Tweddle, who was severely injured by a railway accident on Monday. What am I that, through extensive journeyings, I should have been so long preserved! All the household ill with colds and coughs, induced by this very trying weather.

"*May 26th.*—No improvement in my dear little girl, who coughs almost

incessantly. Surely the Lord is not about again to open the family grave. Oh, if it be possible, Lord, spare my 'one little ewe lamb.' Striving for the submission that shall be neither presumption nor distrust, but find it hard to be realised. God of all grace, help, help, or I perish! What a hard heart mine must be that I cannot be trusted with happiness, lest I should, like Jeshurun, 'wax fat, and kick.'

"*May 29th.*—God has mercifully spared me to complete my thirty-sixth year. My look back to-day has been a very regretful one. I am deeply humbled that my life has been so very unworthy. But I have renewed my covenant. God helping me, I will be the Lord's. I renewed it with my early waking thoughts. I renewed it in the train as I came up from Lincoln, and I have renewed it this evening solemnly, as I stood upon the turf which wraps my 'precious clay' in Kensal Green Cemetery. May God strengthen me to keep my vows!

"*June 16th.*—Depressed and sad. It seems as though my life were to be a life of struggle for submission to God's will, a constant round of wearying and irritating trial. Fanny Vickers and little Fanny both sorely coughing. My sister's cough almost incessant. How vile I must be when so much affliction is needed to keep me humble. Lord, give me the victory! My anxieties are sometimes so consuming that if I am not delivered from them, or enabled to rise above them, I shall die. Thou canst help, O Lord, and Thou alone.

"*August 4th.*—Still engaged at Conference, and necessarily much absorbed with its manifold business, though not without upliftings of heart towards heaven. Renewed my old grief by a visit to Kensal Green to-night, in company with my friends Smith and Wilson; but comforted again by the thought of the guarded rest in which my dear one lies."

The side of Mr. Punshon's life which is revealed in these extracts from his journal was wholly unknown to the multitudes whom he addressed, week after week, in all parts of the country. A few intimate friends were aware of his private sorrows and anxieties. But the spiritual conflicts to which they gave rise, the deep depression, the self-reproach, the sense of loneliness and helplessness that returned again and again,—these were hidden even from them. Still less could the general public imagine at what cost to himself, with what inner distresses and sinkings of heart, he was doing his

work. To all outward appearance his course was one of unbroken popularity and honour. Judged by the crowds that flocked to hear him, by the tributes of the press and the favour of the people at large, by the power with which, in the pulpit and on the platform, he swayed the hearts of tens of thousands, and, above all, judged by the results of his ministry among his own flock and elsewhere, nothing seemed wanting to the happiness of his life. But there was ample counterpoise of suffering to keep the balance. At no period of his life was he wholly free from the discipline of pain, and it would seem as though it kept pace, to say the least, with the increase of his honours and successes. Physical languor, the reaction from excessive toil, nervous fears, sharp attacks of painful ailments, never-ceasing anxieties concerning his children, an almost too complete sympathy with the troubles of others, the oft re-opened wound of his bereavement, and a certain tendency to, perhaps, morbid introspection,—all these together made the “thorn” which kept him from being exalted above measure. There are deeper notes of distress in his journal than any recorded here; but enough will appear in this record of his life to show that he was not exempted from that general law which makes sacrifice and suffering the conditions of victory. “The servant is not greater than his Lord.”

The Conference over, Mr. Punshon took a much-needed holiday at Llandudno, and then, returning to Bayswater, entered on his third and last year in the Hinde Street Circuit.

JOURNAL.

“1860, *September 1st*.—On Sabbath the 12th, while preaching in dear old Norfolk Street, I was distressed by bringing up a small

quantity of blood. The prospect of enforced silence at first was very hard to bear, but I found some power to stay myself upon God. The last fortnight has been spent at Llandudno in company with dear ones and loving friends, and I hope I am the better for it. Spiritually, I have had much to mourn over. A spirit of petulance, murmuring, and rebellion has at times possessed me, for which I grieve before God.

"*September 8th.*—My throat not yet right. Somewhat concerned about it. Greatly tried with myself in consequence of my hasty temper and inconsiderate words. Need to keep a constant guard upon my tongue. Lord, help me to hold my mouth as with a bridle.

"*September 15th.*—Poor Alderman Richardson, of Leeds, dead. How many have I heard of lately who have been called away. Lord, give me a thankful and prepared heart.

"*October 20th.*—Much encouraged by one or two testimonies of usefulness in my ministry. I do feel this as my highest earthly honour, and I trust, I *long after* souls in somewhat, but oh! how far removed from, the spirit of Jesus Christ.

"*November 3rd.*—A week of some suffering. Was seized on Sunday with the same sharp, stabbing pain in my back which has before troubled me, and during the week have suffered from rheumatism and dyspepsia considerably.

"*November 10th.*—*Eheu! me miserum.* Yet no; it does not become me to say so, though I write on my life's saddest anniversary. Two years of widowhood have rolled over me. My precious wife has been two years in heaven. Felt softened and contrite on first waking this morning, and trust I have been enabled afresh to consecrate myself to the God Who has done so much for me. Thus I would try, though 'tis hard work, to make the best of my sorrowful observance of times and seasons.

"*November 17th.*—Much profited at a meeting at the Mission House to bid farewell to several missionaries. It was a good school to me. May God perpetuate the memory.*

"*December 22nd.*—A blessed service on Sabbath night. Seven, I trust, decided for Christ. Decided to recommend the division of the Circuit, Bayswater to be the head of the new one. I am very thankful for this, and would record it to the glory of that grace which has enabled me to minister, with any success, the word of eternal life.

"*December 29th.*—I have much material for praise this week, and some for humbling. Christmas Day was a happy day to me. I felt my heart thrill with gratitude for Advent blessings, and longed to be more worthy of Him Who has redeemed me. An excellent quarterly meeting. A good

* The missionaries referred to were James Calvert, who after eighteen years of labour in Fiji was about to spend another five years there; and Thomas Champness, who was leaving England for Abbeokuta in Western Africa.

spirit throughout. The division agreed to without a dissentient voice. I thank my God through Jesus Christ that I have not laboured in vain. Dear Fanny's health is a perpetual trial to me. I wish I could resign her into the loving hands which will do with her and for her what is best. Poor Mrs. Jackson of Newcastle widowed. A fragile plant for such a storm to sweep over.

"January 9th, 1861.—Spared to see another year and renew my covenant, my first entry ought surely to be one of unmingled gratitude, for the loving-kindness of the Lord has very graciously followed me, and in spite of much infirmity and shortcoming, I stand a determined, willing, pledged servant of the Lord. The year has, however, begun for me with ill-health, for though I was permitted to minister on Sunday, I did so in very great prostration, and have greatly suffered since with feverish cold, and inflamed sore throat. I trust to learn something even by this visitation, as by all others, sent by the kind chastisement of my Heavenly Father.

"January 26th.—Thank God for another week's mercies. I was enabled to preach on Sunday, with some difficulty as regarded my voice, but with some power, so that seven after the evening service were convinced of sin. During the week also I have been mercifully preserved both in journeying and from accident. On Wednesday part of the ornamental work fell from the ceiling of Albion Chapel, Hull, during my sermon, and broke the lamp glass by my side, but I was unhurt. Again, a drunken man made his way into the midst of the crowded congregation, and thoughtlessly, or wickedly, shouted 'Fire!' but, mercifully again, the people remained still. What shall I render for spared life and restored health?"

For nearly two years Mr. Punshon had lectured comparatively seldom. In May 1859 he had finished the delivery, in London and the chief provincial centres, of his lecture on *The Huguenots*, by which he had raised £1,000 for the Spitalfields Chapel. It was then published, and ceased to be available for the platform. The lectures on *The Prophet of Horeb* and *John Bunyan* were also in print. That on *Literature, Science, and Religion* was, for some time, the only one he felt free to deliver, and he was now desirous to lay it aside. His journal of March 2nd, 1861, records the completion of a new lecture, *Daniel in Babylon*, and contains a prayer that God would

bless it to the highest good of those who might listen to it. A few days later it was delivered in Victoria Terrace Chapel, St. John's Wood.

The high level to which he had risen in *The Huguenots* was not maintained, or even attempted. It is somewhat surprising, considering the elements of the picturesque and the tragic to be found in the subject, that he did not treat them as, in the previous lecture, he had shown himself so well able to do. There are no portraits of Daniel or Nebuchadnezzar answering to those of Catharine de Medicis, of Coligny, and Henry of Navarre; no description of Belshazzar's feast that might compare with the account of the massacre of St. Bartholomew. In his *Daniel in Babylon* Mr. Punshon returns to the style and method of his *Prophet of Horeb*. It is not a historical study, but a series of moral and religious lessons drawn from a history with which all are supposed to be familiar. It might, indeed, be the expansion of a sermon. It is didactic and hortatory throughout. He aims at pressing home upon young men the example of Daniel's piety, his fidelity to duty, his fearlessness in the service of God. But these qualities are illustrated and enforced by modern instances, and Daniel is lost sight of for pages together. There is, indeed, very little of Babylon, and not much of Daniel, from first to last. For these reasons we cannot assign to *Daniel in Babylon* a high place among Mr. Punshon's lectures. It has too little historical substance, and the title raises expectations which are not fulfilled.

But as an address founded upon well-known Scriptures, an address practical, earnest, eloquent, de-

nouncing sins, exposing snares, and pleading for Christian faith and morals, it calls for a different estimate. Perhaps in no speech or lecture did he ever address himself more directly, and more successfully, to the conscience of his hearers. To the freedom of the platform is joined the power of the pulpit; the spirit of the preacher animates and exalts the lecturer.

The climax of one impassioned appeal was delivered with tremendous force, and a dramatic vividness which none who heard it will forget:—

"It is against this beginning of evil, this first breach in the sacredness of conscience, that you must take your stand. It is the first careless drifting into the current of the rapids which speeds the frail bark into the whirlpool's wave. Yield to the temptation which now invites you, and it may be that you are lost for ever. Go to that scene of dissipation, enter that gambling hell, follow that 'strange woman' to her house, make that fraudulent entry, engage in that doubtful speculation—what have you done? You have weakened your moral nature, you have sharpened the dagger for the assassin who waits to stab you, and you are accessory, in your measure, to the murder of your own soul. Brother, with all a brother's tenderness, I warn you against a peril which is at once so threatening and so near. Now, while time and chance are given, while in the thickly-peopled air there are spirits which wait your halting, and other spirits which wait to give their ministry to the heirs of salvation—now, let the conflict be decided. Break from the bonds that are already closing around you. Frantic as a bondsman to escape the living hell of slavery, be it yours to hasten your escape from the pursuing evil of sin. There, close at your heels, is the vengeful and resolute enemy. Haste! Flee for your life! Look not behind you, lest you be overtaken and destroyed. On—though the feet bleed, and the veins swell, and the heart-strings quiver. On—spite of wearied limbs, and shuddering memories, and the sobs and pants of labouring breath. Once get within the gates of the city of refuge and you are safe; for neither God's love nor man's will ever, though all the world demand it, give up to his pursuers a poor fugitive slave."

Whatever qualities *Daniel in Babylon* might lack as compared with previous lectures, it was not

less popular. The great audiences that flocked to hear it yielded to the spell, and, as before, were moved to laughter and to tears, to breathless attention and to rapturous applause. "Week-day sermon" as it was, the multitudes hung upon his words, and only feared he would draw to a close too soon. One newspaper report refers to its sermon-like character as follows:—

"Yet strange to say this lecture is the most didactic Mr. Punshon has delivered. None of them aims so directly at the spiritual good of his audience; none has so few poetical recitations, none so little of the descriptive word-painting so attractive in our days, none is so free from sentimental, historical, and patriotic allusions so commonly resorted to in order to elicit applause,—none, in short, would need so little change to adapt it to the pulpit, and no lecture of Mr. Punshon's that we have heard gave more genuine pleasure to his audience than this."

A similar judgment is expressed, some years later, in an American paper:—

"The lecture on *Daniel in Babylon*, often as it has been delivered in Europe and America, would bear to be repeated in every city, town, and village where the English language is spoken. Its literary merit is undoubtedly great; but its solid lessons for men in every sphere of life are a thousand times more valuable than all the flower of language and beauty of illustration in which they are conveyed."

It cannot be supposed that an oration conceived in the spirit and directed to the ends that have been described, could be delivered to great and sympathetic audiences in all parts of the country without making deep impression on some of those who heard it. Instances of this came to light from time to time, and afforded Mr. Punshon more pleasure than all the harvest of applause.

Such were the following. The Rev. H. Beeson wrote:—

"A young man from this circuit went to Stockport to hear your lecture

on *Daniel in Babylon*. The emphasis laid on Daniel's praying three times a day impressed him much. That evening was a turning-point. He came home resolved to pray and serve the Lord, is now an active and useful member of the Society, and cheered us by his fervid narration of his experience in our lovefeast yesterday."

A letter without date or signature has the following:—

"When you began your lecture I was still undecided in two points in which I now see that right and wrong were at issue. I think I may say that where I see my duty clearly I take small time to decide between it and inclination if they are opposed; but in this case I was perplexed, and in a strait betwixt two. So many things seemed to plead on the one side for me to take the easiest and pleasantest course; nothing almost on the other but a vague feeling of it being right so to decide. But when you spoke of Daniel's decision, in an instant I saw everything clearly,—saw into what a snare I had almost fallen. I shall always remember your words, and try to act up to them; and for them, and for the good they have done me, you will have my lifelong gratitude."

JOURNAL.

"*March 9th.*—Very grateful to God for another week's mercies, during which I have been enabled to deliver my lecture on Daniel; I trust not without profit to the hearers. Little Fanny very poorly to-day. I fear beginning as last spring. I long, if it be God's will, that she should be spared.

"*April 9th.*—Have suffered severely for the last few days from an attack of influenza, which (or something else) has induced a sort of light-headedness that is very distressing, and which makes me feel as though I were going to fall in the street when walking. Have felt my mind also tumultuous, and lacking that untroubled rest and self-possession which sure trust in God's mercy and wisdom gives."

It is impossible to overlook the explanation of these ailments and depressions which is furnished by his list of engagements. He was doing too much. The pace could not last. Immediate discomfort, and a serious laying up in store for future account, must needs result from the pressure on his physical and mental powers, and the constant strain upon his

nerves. In the month of February he preached nineteen times, and addressed five large meetings. In March he preached twenty times, and lectured four times, besides meeting classes and attending to various pastoral duties. But the number of his public engagements is not the only matter to be taken into account. It was their exhausting character that bore so heavily upon him, the long journeys, the crowds, the excitement, the nervous exaltation and subsequent reaction. His memory, a willing and capable servant, was treated as though it could by no possibility be overtaken. It was not uncommon for him to deliver from memory three different lectures, each an hour and a half in length, on three successive nights, with no other aid than a few catch-words written on a small card. The penalty of all this was exacted to the full in after years, and in his death at an age when many a public man is at his best; and meanwhile premonitions and foretastes of suffering were afforded. Nothing is easier than to point the moral; few things more difficult than for those concerned to apply it.

JOURNAL.

“April 14th.—A sick-bound waiter upon God, confined to the house instead of ministering, as I had hoped and purposed, in Cornwall. The symptoms which have so long hung about me gathered to a head, and induced complete prostration on Thursday; since which time I have been very unwell, with torpid liver, remaining debility from influenza, and extreme nervous prostration and excitement. Overwhelmed yesterday in the prospect of prolonged uselessness, or of death.

“May 11th.—Have been enabled to work this week, though in feebleness. I feel that I must have rest or I shall utterly break down. The doctors say it is the exhaustion of the system arising from a long continuance of overwork, of brain, lungs, and strength. The Metropolitan Chapel Building movement looks prosperous. God speed it!

"*May 18th.*—So poorly on Sabbath last that I went in the afternoon to a physician. He tells me just what Mr. Jakins did, that there is no organic mischief, but that I must have rest. During the week very busy at the District Meeting, and sustained through all my duties. Profited this afternoon by conversation with George W., a candidate for the ministry, who suddenly left the District Meeting because a heavy cloud hung over his mind. While praying for him I felt my own faith strengthened, and was enabled to see the Saviour on Whom alone I repose.

"*June 18th.*—For the last month have had no opportunity of recording anything in my journal, having been most of the time from home seeking to recruit my strength at Scarborough. While away from home the purpose seemed to be accomplished ; but on my return I feel almost as bad as before. I am striving to do my work in submission to Him Who may lay me aside at any moment, and would ask for a closer conformity to His righteous and holy will.

"*June 29th.*—Have been enabled to go through the somewhat hard work of this week better than I expected, and am thankful that I have been brought home in safety. Have been enabled also, for the most part, to keep my mind stayed upon God. Lord Campbell died suddenly on Sunday. Impartial death forbears not to visit high quarters. Cavour and the Sultan of Turkey also called away. Nothing shows life's value and solemnity more than death. It is a great revealer.

"*July 6th.*—Another week of mercy, though of distressing feebleness. On Sunday and Friday I had protracted attacks of faintness which completely prostrated me. The doctors have again examined me, and have consulted long upon my case. They abide by their former report, that there is no organic mischief, and give me hope, by-and-bye, of being again active and strong.

"*July 17th.*—Somewhat better on the whole, though still nervously debilitated. Preserved in journeying, and brought through my work with thankfulness to God. Finished on Sunday my ministry at Bayswater,—a ministry which has humbled, honoured, and profited me more than any former ministry which I have been privileged to exercise. To God be all the glory ! To-morrow (D.V.) I start for the Conference, and thence to rusticate in hope of being braced for future labour."

On Sunday, July 14th, Mr. Punshon preached at Bayswater in the morning, and at Hinde Street in the evening. With these services his ministry in the Hinde Street Circuit came to its close. The three years of its duration were memorable among all the years of his ministry. They included the keenest

sorrows and severest discipline he had known, but they had been crowded with work, and rich in results, and had witnessed at once the extension of his popularity and influence, and the consolidating of his powers. They had been years of growth and development in all that pertained to his character as a man and a Christian, and to his efficiency as a minister of the gospel.

The number of members in the Circuit had risen from 923 in 1858, to 1,337 in 1861, of whom about 350 belonged to the Bayswater Society. To such an extent was the latter increased and established, that it was determined to separate it from Hinde Street, and constitute it the head of a new Circuit,—the normal method of Methodist extension. It was more than a vindication of the method adopted under Mr. Macdonald's superintendency three years before, and discussed so keenly at the Conference of 1859, that, at the close of Mr. Punshon's term of ministry, the latest venture of the Hinde Street Circuit became itself the head and centre of a Circuit to which the President of the Conference, the Rev. John Rattenbury, and the Rev. G. R. Osborn were appointed as ministers.

It is not suggested that such notable progress was due to Mr. Punshon's labours alone, but undoubtedly it resulted from them in large measure.

The sermon with which Mr. Punshon closed his ministry at Bayswater was preached from Acts xx. 24: "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel

of the grace of God." It was a sort of recapitulation of the essential elements of a gospel ministry,—the sin, the guilt, the helplessness of man, the great redemption by the blood of Christ, and faith as the condition and instrument of salvation. As gathering up and re-affirming the substance of his preaching during three years, this summary gives convincing proof that his popularity owed nothing to novelty of doctrine. Nothing could be simpler and less pretending than his statement of accepted evangelical truths. The only elements of novelty were in the style, the rhetorical methods, the glow of the language, the rhythmic movement of the sentences, and a strange, incommunicable power of delivery in which all his nervous force and spiritual intensity seemed to find expression.

[Among the sermons which belong to the Bayswater period of Mr. Punshon's ministry are four upon the parable of the Prodigal Son. They were preached in October and November 1860, and were subsequently published by him. As they were prepared for the press by himself, they are fairer specimens of his best efforts than those which have been given to the world by irresponsible reporters—persons whom he held in great dread and dislike—or published from his manuscript since his death. The first is entitled *Sin and its Consequences*. The prodigal's departure into a far country and his beginning to be in want, are portrayed, or rather illustrated, with much freedom and pictorial power. There are passages that held the hearers breathless. They *saw* the desolation portrayed, the honour wrecked, the life wasted, ruined, cast away to loneliness and shame:—

“There is always sadness in the contemplation of ruin. Amid the broken columns of Baalbec or Palmyra, shapeless heaps where once proud cities stood ; in some desolate fane, with the moonlight shining ghostly into crypt and cloisters, the mind dwells regretfully upon the former time, when the hum of men broke lively on the listening ear, or through the long aisles there swept the cadence of some holy psalm. We gaze mournfully upon a deserted mansion, with the sky looking clear upon its crumbling masonry or naked rafters,—the tall, dank grass in the courtyard which once echoed to the hoof of the charger,—the garden once kept so trimly, now a wilderness of weeds and flowers, and, trailing languidly over the blackening walls, the ivy, that only parasite which clings faithfully to ruin. Sadder still is it to look upon the overthrown temple of the human mind, when morbid fancies prey on the distempered brain ; and when the eye that should be kingly in its glances, is dulled in the sullenness of the idiot, or glares in the frenzy of the madman.

“But there are sadder sights than these—sights that wake more solemn and passionate mourning—in the moral wastes of the world, and in the debasement of the nature which once bore the image of God. I see wealth, the gift of a good God, and intended to be used for His glory, hoarded by avarice, or lavished in extravagance and sin. I see genius, that royal dower of heaven to man, grovelling, a pander, among the stews of sensuality, or blaspheming in all the ribaldries of scepticism. I see formalism and indifference, like Herod and Pilate, making truce together that they may slay the Holy and the Just One. I see men engrossed as eagerly about present advantage as if there were no death to prepare for, and no future to inherit,—living for themselves as selfishly as if they had blotted out from the universe its God. I see energy misdirected, passion frantic and triumphing, truth prostrate, error in high and even in holy places, manhood run to waste, the inheritance of immortality bartered for a golden bauble, conscience discrowned and a slave, the law broken, the gospel rejected, the blood of Jesus trampled on by those for whom it was shed, and accounted an unholy thing. Oh ! brethren, is there not enough in the ruin to bring sorrow even upon an angel’s gladness ? And should not you who are yourselves thus degraded,—and there are some of you here,—arouse yourselves, and throw your whole souls into the search for a refuge against the day of vengeance ?—for God will surely be avenged upon a nation and a people like this.

“‘He would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat ; and no man gave unto him.’ How utter and terrible the destitution ! What !—friendless ? Where are the companions of his debauchery, the flatterers who laughed at his jokes, and drank his wine, and spunged upon his reckless liberality ? Are they all gone from him—*all* ? And are these thy friendships, thou hollow, painted harlot of a world ? ‘No man gave unto him.’ And then came the famine, with its sickening hunger, and its

tortures of remorse, that wounded spirit which was a still sharper thorn. 'And he began to be in want.' He, upon whom in childhood's years no breath had blown too rudely ; he, whose every want had been anticipated by a wishful tenderness that hardly brooked to slumber ; he, whose youth was gay with the holiday promise of a sky without a cloud,—he began to be in want. So the famine came. But that dread famine of the soul is drearier, which sated worldlings sooner or later feel ; that famine when the spirit loathes its former food, when it shudders at the boisterous greeting of its associates in sin, and would give worlds if it could efface those sinful memories which have burnt into the soul like fire.

"Homelessness, waste, famine ;—and do you really choose these things when God offers you the banquet, the abundance, the heaven ? Why, oh why will you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not ? I could almost rejoice—and surely it were no unkindness—that the famine should consume you, if only, like the prodigal, you might be driven back to the Father's house."

In the second sermon, *A Mind's Transition*, he describes the awakening of conscience, and the conflict of pride and despondency with humility and penitence. It contains a picture of proud despair in the soul of a convicted but unhumbled sinner, drawn in lurid colours and set in deepest shadows. The whole passage (Sermons, i., 159) is one that was bound to be of overwhelming force, or else "o'erleap itself and fall o' the other side." Not one preacher in a thousand could safely venture on such a dramatic presentation of a spiritual conflict. It could only be justified by success,—that is, by its true effect upon the hearers. No speaker who had misgivings as to his method, no preacher whose eye was not single, could have delivered it without a greater or less collapse. One note of insincerity, and the dreadful scene portrayed would dissolve into a ruin of words, and leave the hearers, not only unimpressed, but effectually protected against any further appeal to their feelings or their fears.

“ Well, it is over ; the worst has come at last. It has threatened long, and there have been many dark prophecies of the end. I am ruined ! That brief revel of my life—ah, how I hate the memory ! Why did God make me thus ? Why was the blood so hot in my veins that quiet happiness, such as I used to have, seemed all too dull and slow ? Those swine feed contented. They limit their desires, and are happy in their limitation. They were never other than they are, but I—curses on the knaves that fawned upon me ! curses on my own folly that fed itself upon their lies ! is there not one of them that cares for me ? not one that throws a thought after the man he has helped to ruin ?—Bind the girdle tighter, that will keep the hunger down ! Ah, my table is soon spread. Husks ! bring the courses in ! How dainty for the pampered servants that once stood behind my chair ! Well, I’ll brave it all. What ! yield and bow myself, a pitiful mendicant ? No, never ! Ah, if my father could but see me now ! No, I cannot go back to be the butt of the servants’ scorn, to writhe under the contemptuous pity of my sleek and jealous brother, and meet the justly offended glances of my father’s eye. Better anything than that ! Better these brute swine, these desolate fields, this savage isolation from the human—nay, if the worst come to the worst, I can but fold the robe over my broken heart and die.”

The third discourse deals with *The Joy of Return*, and the fourth introduces the Elder Brother, and has for title, *The Dissident from the Common Joy*. The remark already made respecting Mr. Punshon’s lectures may be recalled in laying down these sermons. They may have disappointed the reader. Many readers they will assuredly disappoint. They will ask for more of exposition and argument, and less of illustration ; they will feel the need of calmer statement and more careful reasoning, for half-lights and middle-tones in place of the high rhetorical effects and sweeping declamations. But, it may be repeated, these sermons are not for the reader. Not even when their author prepared them for the press could he give them a character different from that which was inwrought from the first. They were

conceived in a mind essentially oratoric ; they took shape under the influence which the presence of the multitude exercises upon a sensitive and impassioned nature. He must needs illustrate, portray, declaim, and, taking the familiar truths of the Gospel, cast them forth in picturesque and glowing sentences, rich—sometimes over-rich—in the play of imagination and fancy. This was at once his calling and his gift. And the power of his delivery gave the highest possible effect to his style. No canons of criticism can avail against indisputable facts. A high place among the permanent products of the pulpit cannot be claimed for these sermons ; but, as uttered by the living preacher, as words spoken to the heart and conscience by an earnest ambassador for Christ, they were among the most powerful and effective appeals made to that generation. They not only attracted and pleased, but they brought the Gospel home to multitudes in such a manner that they owed to the preacher “ their own selves also.”

Four years after he had left Bayswater, the Rev. George Maunder wrote to him from thence : “ Everywhere I meet your spiritual children.”

Had circumstances permitted, Mr. Punshon would have cultivated the pastoral side of his ministry to a much greater extent than was actually the case. He had a deep sense of ministerial responsibility, and of the worth of individual lives. He knew that personal intercourse and influence have a part assigned to them in the cure of souls for which nothing can be a substitute. Throughout his eager, hurried, public life he prized most highly such opportunities as were

given him of counselling or consoling individuals; and, considering the character his ministry had necessarily assumed, it is surprising that he was able to do as much proper pastoral work as he actually accomplished.

The following undated letters, written about this time, will show that while preaching to great congregations he did not lose sight of the welfare of individuals.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Will you pardon me if I venture to express to you by letter the affectionate sympathy which I feel with you under your recent heavy trial?

"I can well conceive how, linked intimately with your brother in commercial as well as in social life, you should almost sink under the pressure of care and anxiety which his removal will occasion you. Your own comparative youth, the cares inseparable from business in this age of competition, and the solicitude and affection which you cherish for your mother and sisters at home, all these will make your present feelings acute, and your future prospects sufficiently formidable. While I can thoroughly sympathise with you in your trouble, I should be unkind as a friend and unfaithful as a minister of Jesus Christ, if knowing where strong consolation and efficient strength are to be found, I hesitated to press upon you, with earnest affection, to seek at once the kingdom of God, a saving participation in the benefits of the great Atonement. There is a loud call to you, my dear sir, in your brother's unexpected removal. You know your duty, and the claims which God and eternity have upon you; and (pardon me if I err) I have sometimes thought that it has been hard work for you to resist the striving Spirit within. *Now* is the time for your decision, and upon your yielding or resistance, *now* when the heart is softened beneath the rain of a great sorrow, may depend your everlasting destiny.

"God and His Church claim you, and besides your own present and eternal advantage, you are gifted with capacities for usefulness of no ordinary kind. Forgive me if I have in aught offended in the writing of this letter. Believe me, it springs from no merely professional motive, but from a sincere interest in you, and a desire for your lasting good."

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Your letter was received with the fulness of a glad heart. You know not how often I have thought of you, and prayed for you, and wondered when the struggle would cease, or if ever I might

rejoice over you as yielding to the striving Spirit, and the pleading Son. I know the struggle of a mind constituted as yours is, and with this knowledge I thank God the more that your convictions have been so strong, that you have not scrupled to declare them. 'Pray for you,' indeed I will, that He Who has begun the work may carry it on even unto life everlasting. I counsel you to come at once, just as you are, to Christ, to take the offered pardon, and have peace and joy *in believing*.

"You know my opinion of class-meetings. I esteem them very, very highly. I suffered from the same temptation to stay away until I had obtained mercy ; but there is nothing (as I found) so likely to clear away difficulties from the path of the bewildered, as a well-conducted class-meeting. You must have a leader in whom you can confide, and (forgive me) you must lay aside the reserve which you confess, and which might deprive you of invaluable counsel and aid. May God direct you, and lead you unerringly to Himself !"

CHAPTER VIII.

1861—1864.

LONDON, ISLINGTON. Aged 37 to 40.

Lecture : *Macaulay*.—Channel Islands.—Cornwall Conference.—Proposal to raise £10,000 for Chapels in Watering-Places.—Opening of Chapel in Paris.—Letters to his Little Daughter.—Lecture : *Wesley and his Times*.—Jubilee of Missionary Society.—Letters to Mr. Hirst.

MR. PUNSHON'S next appointment was to the Islington Circuit, at that time one of the strongest in the Connexion. His colleagues were the Revs. Theophilus Woolmer, Wm. Hirst, and Wm. Gibson. His friend M'Cullagh removed at the same time to Stockport.

JOURNAL.

"*September 21st.*—The treatment of my physician and the rest and fresh air of the Highlands have somewhat relieved me from the symptoms which have so long oppressed me, and I have been brought through the excitement of Conference and of removal to a new sphere of labour with comparative comfort. I am now settled in Islington, happily as to my house, and with a fair prospect of usefulness, if I be but devoted and holy. I have felt very keenly leaving Bayswater, where, unworthy as I know myself to be, I have many children in the Gospel.

"*September 28th.*—Preached with some comfort and power my first sermon at Liverpool Road. The quarterly meeting on Friday passed off quietly. The people seem in good heart, and I trust we shall have the 'large blessing.'

"*October 5th.*—Shocked inexpressibly this week by the death of poor

Theophilus Pearson. He died well. Can I not trust the grace which is thus able to deliver? I feel determined to consecrate myself afresh to the service to which I have devoted my life."

Mr. Pearson is still remembered by many as a man of brilliant powers and a noble disposition. His short ministry of ten years was an eminently useful one, and gave promise of exceptional success. He died after an illness of only six days, greatly lamented by his brethren in the ministry, and by the people generally. It was a labour of love to Mr. Punshon to write a brief sketch of his departed friend which appeared in the *Watchman* of October 10th, 1861:—

"... In the death of Theophilus Pearson our beloved Methodism has sustained a loss of no common order. It would be difficult, among the many bright names of our rising ministry, to point to one who seemed to combine so many qualifications of promise.

"With a graceful figure, with a face so marvellously expressive that in it, as in a glass, was reflected each feeling of the soul, with a beautiful smile, with the spirit and manners of a gentleman, there was that in his appearance which was at once attractive and commanding: and who that was privileged with his friendship will forget his transparent sincerity, and the heart that was felt to beat in the clasp of his loving hand?

"And this goodly casket enclosed a goodlier jewel. Though there was no lack of those fine adjustments which go far to balance character, his manliness stood out so prominent as to strike all observers. His lecture on 'Individuality,' which he delivered so successfully to the Young Men's Christian Association in their last year's course at Exeter Hall, must have been drawn from his own inner consciousness. He was every inch a man. He had a soul of his own, and it was a right noble one. Intense in his love of the truth, he was intense in his hatred of all that would pervert or conceal it. Constitutionally disposed to champion the weak, his love of liberty was a passion. He was profoundly intolerant of the shabby and the cruel, and his language was not always guarded when he denounced the meanness of falsehood, or was roused by the insolence of tyranny. . . .

"Greatly depressed at leaving Sheffield, where he had spent three years of happy toil, and where his memory will long be green, he had entered, notwithstanding, with a heart and with a will upon his work in Hull. His friends were rejoicing in the hope for him of larger Gospel triumphs,

when, with terrible haste, came upon them the tidings of disaster—that their friend was ill, dying, dead! Thus does God vindicate His own supremacy, rebuke the expectations of His people, and show that He needs not any of His creatures to preserve His ark, and to carry on His work in the world. It is for us, in reverent submission, to say, as our friend himself would have us, ‘Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight,’ and to wait for the reason of the stroke, until the time when from the mouth of every sepulchre the great stone shall be rolled away.

“ . . . For him there needs no mourning. And yet nature will have its way, and all the human within us groans in spirit, as beside the cave in Bethany the Divine-human groaned before us,—

‘ So good, so kind, and he is gone.’

As the words are written, the heart throbs with tenderness, and the eyes fill with unbidden tears. ‘*Vale, vale, in æternum vale!*’ Nay, thanks be to God, the ‘*in æternum*’ is erased from our farewells by the glad hope of the Gospel. Brothers in the same faith, and holding fast the beginning of our confidence, we shall meet again.

“With no prompting but that of a full heart, and with no warrant save that of the sincerest friendship, have these lines been penned. It is not asked that he shall seem to all as he will for ever seem to the friend who in this feeble tribute mourns him; but there are times when silence is treason to memory; and there was that in the mind of the writer which rebelled against the thought that the name of THEOPHILUS PEARSON should be forgotten, or noticed only amid the common and undistinguishable dead.

“‘I care not, in these fading days,
To raise a cry that lasts not long,
And round thee with the breeze of song
To stir a little dust of praise.

“‘Thy leaf has perished in the green,
And, while we breathe beneath the sun,
The world, which credits what is done,
Is cold to all that might have been.

“‘But what of that? my darkened ways
Shall ring with music all the same;
To breathe my loss is more than fame,
To utter love more sweet than praise.’”

The remainder of the year was spent, for the most part, in quiet work in his own circuit. He gave no lectures, but was preparing a new one to be launched

early in the following year. His health was far from good, and his nerves were exceedingly sensitive to all symptoms of ailment. From time to time he was alarmed by returns of the hæmorrhage from the throat. The attacks were slight, and they soon passed away, but they kept him in a state of apprehension and fear against which he strove with varying success.

The anniversary of his loss returns, and he writes:—

"Again the season of the year when my life's great sorrow came upon me. Three years in heaven! My precious wife! precious, and mine still. Oh, for grace to comfort myself now and always with the glad hope of the Gospel."

He was encouraged by signs of blessing on his work at Highbury. At Hornsey Road also, and at Hackney, the showers began to fall. At Liverpool Road, too, there were conversions. Meanwhile, Mrs. Clough, the widow of his uncle, was very near death, suffering much, but resigned and peaceful.

JOURNAL.

"*December 21st.*—God has visited the whole nation during the past week by the sudden removal of the Prince Consort, who died last Saturday evening at ten minutes to eleven. At the present crisis this is indeed a terrible calamity, but the Lord reigneth, and He can make our extremity His opportunity to save us. Poor Aunt Clough also hovering between life and death. Thus do private and public griefs commingle.

"*December 28th.*—Brought by God's grace to the last Saturday evening of another year,—a year of many mercies, some trials, and, alas! of many shortcomings. In the review of it to-night, I cast myself afresh upon Jesus, my Divine Daysman. He, and He alone, can save. Mr. Woolmer's child interred to-day, I officiating. Mrs. Clough still lingers. Oh for the gift, rare as it is precious, of improving alike privilege and time."

On the last night but one of the year, just before midnight, the new lecture was finished. He wrote to Mr. Hirst:—

“December 31st, 1861.

“*Macaulay* came to an end last night, at ten minutes to twelve. Will you come down to dinner, and read him this afternoon? Do, there's a good fellow.”

This lecture was in some respects a new departure. *Elijah, Daniel, Bunyan, The Huguenots*,—in each of these he had kept close to the central themes of religion. They were but sermons carried from the pulpit to the platform, more broadly handled, and set forth with greater freedom of illustration and wealth of language. But would this be possible with *Macaulay* for a text? The result showed that it was, though there were difficulties in the way. Mr. Punshon's aims and methods were now so established that he could not do other than preach the Gospel, whatever might be his theme; and, as regards its tone and spirit and pervading principles, the lecture on *Macaulay* is not to be distinguished from those which preceded it.

The subject had strong attractions for him. *Macaulay* had long ranked high among his favourite authors. In some “*Confessions*” written in a friend's album, half in jest and half in earnest, he places *Macaulay's* name first among the prose writers he admired. Nor is it difficult to understand this. Alike by the practical character of his mind and the rhetorical qualities of his style, *Macaulay* attracted, charmed, and influenced Punshon both in earlier and later years. The author of the *Essays*, perhaps more than any one else, had kindled his boyish imagination, and set it working in the direction of history and biography. To him he owed

much intellectual quickening and delight, and the obligation—often acknowledged—has its permanent witness in certain characteristics of his own style, in his love of finished portraiture, of antithetic sentences, and the massing from time to time of rhythmic processions of stately words.

Two years had passed since Macaulay's death, and although many years were to elapse before the publication of the biography which worthily links the name of Trevelyan with that of Macaulay, yet so much had been written—critical, eulogistic, biographical—as to render Mr. Punshon's task, in his own judgment, a difficult one. He compared himself to a gleaner in a harvest-field from which the corn had been reaped. But his chief difficulty arose from the fact that Macaulay's religious "moderatism," to give it its gentlest name, prevented him from being a hero after the lecturer's own heart. He compared his embarrassment to that of a son, "keenly affectionate, clinging with reverent fondness to the memory of a father, who is aware of one detraction from that father's excellence which he may not conscientiously conceal." He would not make the great and honoured name of Macaulay, a man so estimable in so many ways, a mere text from which to point a painful moral; but, on the other hand, he could not review his splendid career, with its great achievements in literature and politics, and make no reference to the fact that earnest Christian discipleship is the highest aspect of the noblest lives. To criticism exclusively literary he had no call; for this he had, perhaps, no special qualification. In reviews and magazines without number such criticism had ap-

peared. His heart warmed towards the man, master of so many arts and accomplishments—scholar, essayist, historian, orator, politician; and he desired to tell the story of his life, to pay generous tribute to his powers, and to quicken the mental and moral life of his hearers by noble passages from his writings. Had Macaulay's attitude towards religion been such as to enable him to crown his eulogy with the last and highest praise, how would he have rejoiced in his task! As it was, he spoke out upon what he called "the one great defect in Macaulay's life and writings" in the passage that follows. It was strongly animadverted upon in certain quarters at the time, and by some it will be resented still. But no apology shall accompany it here. It is in the truest sense characteristic. His strongest convictions are embodied in it; and being the man he was, he could not say other than he did.

"The one great defect in Macaulay's life and writings, viewed from a Christian standpoint, is his negativism, to use no stronger word, on the subject of evangelical religion. Not that he ever impeaches its sacredness,—no enemy of religion can claim his championship; he was at once too reverent and too refined for infidelity; but he nowhere upholds the Divine presence or presidency; nowhere traces the unity of a purpose higher than the schemes of men; nowhere speaks of the precepts of Christianity as if they were divinely sanctioned; nowhere gives to its cloud of witnesses the adhesion of his honoured name. As we read his essays or his history, when he lauds the philosophy of Bacon or tells of the deliverances of William, we are tempted to wonder at his serene indifference to those great questions which, sooner or later, must present themselves to the mind of every man. Did the solemn problems of the soul—the whence of its origin, the what of its purpose, the whither of its destiny—never perplex and trouble him? Had he no fixed opinion about religion as a reality, that inner and vital essence which should be 'the core of all the creeds'? Or did he content himself with 'the artistic balance of conflicting forces,' and regard Protestantism and Popery alike as mere schemes of the hour, influences equally valuable in their day, and

equally mortal when their work was done? Did it never strike him that there was a Providence at work when his hero was saved from assassination, when the fierce winds scattered the Armada, when the fetters were broken which Rome had forged and fastened, when from the struggles of years rose up the slow and stately growth of English freedom? Why did he always brand vice as an injury or an error? Did he never feel it to be a sin? Looking at the present—why always through the glass of the past and never by the light of the future? Did he never pant after a spiritual insight, nor throb with a religious faith? Alas! that on the matters which these questions touch his writings make no sign. No one expected the historian to become a preacher, or the essayist a theologian; but that there should be so studious an avoidance of those deep, awful matters, which have to do with the eternal, and that in a history in which religion, in some phase or other, was the inspiration of the events which he records, is a fact which no Christian heart can think of without surprise and sorrow.

"It has become fashionable to praise a neutral literature, which prides itself upon its freedom from bias, and upon the broad line of separation which it draws between things secular and sacred; and there are many who call this liberality; but there is an old Book whose authority, thank God! is not yet deposed from the heart of Christian England, which would brand it with a very different name. That Book tells us that the fig-tree was blasted, not because it was baneful, but because it was barren; and that the bitter curse was denounced against Meroz, not because she rallied with the forces of the foe, but because she came not up to the help of the Lord. Amid the stirring and manifold activities of the age in which we live, to be neutral in the strife is to rank with the enemies of the Saviour. There is no greater foe to the spread of His cause in the world than the placid indifferentism which is too honourable to betray, while it is too careless or too cowardly to join Him. The rarer the endowments, the deeper the obligation to consecrate them to the glory of their Giver. That brilliant genius, that indefatigable industry, that influencing might of speech, that wondrous and searching faculty of analysis,—what might they not have accomplished if they had been pledged to the recognition of a higher purpose than literature, and fearless in their advocacy of the faith of Christ! Into the secret history of the inner man, of course we may not enter; and we gladly hope, from small but significant indications that a searcher may discover in his writings, as well as from intimations, apparently authentic, which were published shortly after his death, that, if there had rested any cloud on his experience, the Sun of Righteousness dispersed it, and that he anchored his personal hope on that 'dear name' which his earliest rhymes had sung; but the regret may not be suppressed that his transcendent powers were given to any object lower than the highest. And when I see two life-courses before me, both ending in West-

minster Abbey,—for the tardy gratitude of the nation adjudged to Zachary Macaulay's remains the honour which it denied to his living reputation,—when I see the father, poor, slandered, living a life of struggle, yet secretly but mightily working for the oppressed and the friendless, and giving all his energies in a bright summer of consecration unto God ; and when I see the son, rich, gifted, living a life of success, excellent and envied in everything he undertook, breathing the odours of a perpetual incense-cloud, and passing from the memory of an applauding country to the tomb, but aiming through his public lifetime only at objects which were 'of the earth earthy'—I feel that, if there be truth in the Bible, and sanction in the obligations of religion, and immortality in the destinies of man, 'he aimed too low who aimed beneath the skies ;' that the truer fame is with the painstaking and humble Christian worker ; and that the amaranth which encircles the father is a greener and more fragrant wreath than the laurel which crowns the forehead of the more gifted and brilliant son."

Among the more notable passages in the lecture is a series of portrait sketches, picturesque and vivid, of the worthies of "the Clapham Sect,"—Thornton and Wilberforce, Granville Sharp and Zachary Macaulay.

Another contains a genial and humorous reference to Macaulay's memorable expression "the bray of Exeter Hall." He thought it had been resented too much.

"Considering that fifteen years have elapsed since its utterance ; considering that none of us has been so prudent that we can afford to be judged by the law which would make a man an offender for a word ; considering that it was one of the most effective war-cries which routed him at Edinburgh, and that by English fair-play no one should be punished twice for the same offence ; considering that the word expresses the call of a trumpet as well as the music of a certain quadruped, and that we need not, unless we like, prefer the lower analogy when a higher one is ready to our hand ; considering, though one must very delicately whisper it, that amid the motley groups who have held their councils in Exeter Hall it is not impossible that less noble sounds have now and then mingled with the leonine roar ; considering that Macaulay's writings have done so much to foster those eternal principles of truth and love to whose advocacy Exeter Hall is consecrated ; and considering especially that Exeter Hall survived the assault, and seems in pretty good condition still, that it has never ceased its witness-bearing against idolatry and perfidy and wrong, and

that its testimony is a word of power to-day,—I should like to pronounce that Exeter Hall has forgiven him, and that this, its very latest 'bray,' is a trumpet-blast which swells his fame."

In none of his lectures is the subject carried to a finer and more impressive close. After mentioning the names of men of letters whom death had gathered during the year—Humboldt, and Prescott, and Washington Irving, De Quincey, and Leigh Hunt, Hallam and Sir James Stephen—he said:—

"It seemed as if the spoiler had reserved the greatest victim to the last. . . . Suddenly, with the parting year, the summons came. . . . If Macaulay had an ambition dearer than the rest, it was that he might lie 'in that temple of silence and reconciliation where the enmities of twenty generations lie buried;' and the walls of the great Abbey enclose him 'in their tender and solemn gloom.' . . .

"The pall was over the city on that drear January morning, and the cold raw wind wailed mournfully as if sighing forth the requiem of the great spirit that was gone; and amid saddened friends—some who had shared the sports of his childhood, some who had fought with him the battles of political life—amid warm admirers and generous foes, while the aisles rang with the cadences of solemn music, and here and there were sobs of sorrow, they bore him to that quiet resting-place, where he 'waits the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body.' Not far from the place of his sepulture are the tablets of Gay, and Rowe, and Thomson, and Garrick, and Goldsmith; on his right sleeps Isaac Barrow, the ornament of his own Trinity College; on his left, no clamour breaks the slumber of Samuel Johnson; from a pedestal at the head of the grave, serene and thoughtful, Addison looks down; the coffin which was said to have been exposed at the time of the funeral, probably held all that was mortal of Richard Brinsley Sheridan; Campbell gazes pensively across the transept; and Shakespeare, the remembrancer of mortality, reminds us from his open scroll that the 'great globe itself, and all that it inhabit, shall dissolve, and, like the baseless fabric of a vision, leave not a wreck behind;' and Handel, comforting us in our night of weeping by the glad hope of immortality, seems to listen while they chant forth his own magnificent hymn, 'His body is buried in peace, but his name liveth for evermore.' . . . From royal sarcophagus, and carven shrine; from the rustling of those faded banners; yonder where the Chathams and Mansfields repose, here where the orators and poets lie, comes there not a voice to us of our frailty, borne into our hearts by the brotherhood of dust upon

which our footsteps tread ? How solemn the warning ! O for grace to learn it !

“ ‘ Earth’s highest glory ends in—“ Here he lies ! ”
And “ dust to dust ” concludes her noblest song.’ ”

“ And shall they rise, all these ? Will there be a trumpet-blast so loud that none of them may refuse to hear it, and the soul, re-entering its shrine of eminent or common clay, pass upward to the judgment ? ‘ Many and mighty, but all hushed,’ shall they submit with us to the arbitrations of the last assize ? And in that world, is it true that gold is not the currency, and that rank is not hereditary, and that there is only one name that is honoured ? Then, if this is the end of all men, let the living lay it to his heart. Solemn and thoughtful, let us seek for an assured refuge ; childlike and earnest, let us confide in the one accepted Name ; let us realize the tender and infinite nearness of God our Father, through Jesus our Surety and Friend ; and in hope of a joyful resurrection for ourselves, and for the great Englishman we mourn, let us sing his dirge in the words of the truest poet of our time :—

“ ‘ He is gone who seemed so great.
Gone, but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own
Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in state,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him.
But speak no more of his renown,
Lay your earthly fancies down,
And in the solemn temple leave him,
God accept him, Christ receive him.’ ”

→ *Macaulay* was first delivered in the Town Hall, Newcastle-on-Tyne, January 29th, 1862. It proved as effective as any of his previous lectures. Mr. Punshon had now reached that high table-land of popularity on which he was to move as long as health and strength should last. He had acquired perfect mastery of his method, and a certainty of touch upon great audiences that never failed. There was, indeed, nothing of experiment in the essay-orations which, for some years, followed one another

in quick succession. To his instinct of style and delivery large experience was now added. He knew himself; in his boldest efforts he kept well within the range of his powers; and he knew the great, eager, impressible audiences of evangelical England as few men have known them. Had one unacquainted with English life, or at least with Nonconformist and Evangelical English life, been suddenly set down in Exeter Hall, or the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, at some great climax of *John Bunyan* or *The Huguenots*, of *Macaulay* or *Wilberforce*, he would have witnessed as remarkable a scene as our land could show. Three thousand people spring, as by electric discharge, from the tension of bowed and breathless listening to wild excitement and raptures of applause. It is not depth or originality of thought that produces this result. This has been acknowledged again and again in these pages. To move great masses of people in this manner two things are needful: first, the sincere and unreserved throwing of the whole man into what is said; and, second, the power of magnetic utterance, a delivery that, in some unexplained manner, shall come home to the hearer, stirring his pulses and moving upon all his sensibilities. As we trace the course of Mr. Punshon's life-labours, the conviction grows that it was this latter gift which gave his work its special character. In moral and spiritual sources of strength he had many equals; in intellectual power and training he had many superiors; but in the ability so to deliver his own productions, or those of others, as to sway an audience with overmastering emotion, he had no

superiors; in his own day at least he had no equal. Perhaps the most striking illustrations of this power were furnished by his recitations of poetry. To many who heard him it was the revelation of altogether unimagined possibilities in the way of rhythmic, modulated utterance. What with the professed elocutionist, on the one hand, and the fearless but incapable amateur, on the other, there may in these days be need of apology for such an art as recitation. But in itself it is a noble one, and a true master of it is between the poet and the musician, something akin to both. Five-and-twenty years ago there was no man in England, professed elocutionist or other, who could move an audience by the recitation of a stirring or pathetic poem as Mr. Punshon could. When he repeated the story of the "Keeping of the Bridge" from Macaulay's *Horatius*, the people seemed to hear the sullen roar of the swollen Tiber, and the long howling of the wolves; they saw the crest of brave Horatius above the surges, and when

". . . he entered through the river-gate,
Borne by the joyous crowd,"

the whole audience with shouts and clapping helped to bring him into the city.

After its delivery at Newcastle, the usual course of things followed. Requests poured in from all the great centres of the country, and from many places neither great nor central. During the next few months it was given in London, Leeds, Bradford, Manchester, Birmingham, Derby, Northampton, and many other towns. In London the success of *Macaulay* surpassed that of any previous lecture.

On the evening of February 11th, Exeter Hall was crowded to excess long before the hour appointed. A month later it was repeated in the same place to a similar crowd; and the following month St. James's Hall was filled to overflowing on the occasion of its delivery for the third time. The note in his journal is:—

“Privileged again to deliver my lecture to such an audience as I have never had before.”

The year 1862 was one of intense and unremitting toil. The lecture on *Daniel* was still running its course side by side with *Macaulay*. Each of them was delivered fourteen times during the year; and far more numerous than his lectures were the sermons preached in almost every corner of the land. Nor did these wide and varied extra-parochial labours seriously interfere with his usefulness in his own Circuit. The foundation-stone of a new chapel at Mildmay Park was laid in the spring. At the March Quarterly Meeting an increase of fifty-one members of Society was reported, and a resolution passed for the formation of a new Circuit. But he was doing too much, and he knew it. Entries of this kind are not infrequent in his journal:—

“*May 24th.*—Preserved again in journeying, and brought home safely, though sore wearied with labour. Am doing too much, I feel; but it is hard to deny calls for help which come from every quarter.”

At times he suffered, though not so severely as in some other years, from exhaustion and depression. The fluctuations in his little daughter's health were almost reproduced in his own, with such sympathy and solicitude did he watch over her. The death

of friends, and even of those with whom he had but slight intimacy, never failed to touch him deeply. This was characteristic of him through life. The kind of familiarity with death's doings which most busy men acquire, never seems to have come to him. Each visitation in the wide circle of his acquaintances awakened emotion as fresh and keen as in his earliest days. The obituary records in his journal are very numerous, for his mind, instead of turning from the thought of death, schooled itself to dwell upon it reverently and piously. In 1862 his journal contains the following entries:—

“January 25th.—Dear Aunt Clough released from her suffering yesterday. Another link loosened. My dear friend Mr. Duncan also called away,—a brave, strong soul stilled in the silence of the grave. The calls are constant.

“March 1st.—Another daughter of Mr. Job's summoned away.

“June 21st.—Dear Mr. Inglis gone. Mrs. Atmore, Mr. Williams, of Waterloo Road, and Mrs. George Hunter, of Newcastle, all likewise called to put off the earthly tabernacle.

“July 5th.—Poor Joseph Edge summoned away, and Mr. Edward Corderoy seriously ill.

“July 19th.—Mr. Capp called home very suddenly, and Mrs. Naylor also released from suffering. The death-roll amongst our ministers has been very formidable since the last Conference, and many have fallen whom I have intimately known. Oh! to be stirred up by each admonishing to give greater diligence for heaven.

“November 15th.—Mr. Glenn called away, and the dear Woodsons again in trouble. Lord, deliver them, for they love Thy people, and have trusted in Thee.”

These brief records show him as one whose “eye kept watch o’er man’s mortality.” They reveal an aspect of his inner life that should not be overlooked.

In the month of June 1862 Mr. Punshon spent a fortnight in the Channel Islands on a missionary

deputation. From time immemorial it has been the kindly custom of the Methodists in Jersey and Guernsey to keep festival during their missionary anniversary. "The Deputation" finds an ample programme of work awaiting him in the shape of sermons and meetings, and, along with it, schemes for his hospitable entertainment indoors and out of doors. Picnics to the lovely bays and glens, with an excursion to Sark or the little isle of Herm, alternate with services and meetings in town and country. It is a time of high and pure enjoyment of which succeeding "Deputations" bring away the pleasantest memories; while among the warm-hearted friends in Jersey and Guernsey traditions of their distinguished or undistinguished visitors are prized and cherished. Save for the miseries of a rough passage from one island to the other, Mr. Punshon keenly enjoyed his visit. He lectured once in Guernsey, and twice in Jersey, preached four times, and spoke at six missionary meetings. Writing to Mr. Hirst, he just hints at a certain peril arising out of the abounding hospitality:—

LETTER TO REV. W. HIRST.

"June 7th, 1862.

"The winds and waves did their spiriting *not* very gently, and I am safely here (Guernsey), to remain until I have again to tempt the sea on Thursday next. I was not ill in crossing, but I did *not* enjoy it. I could not—

"'Move about the deck with joy
And with the certain step of man.'

This is a gem of an island,—azaleas, cactuses, rhododendrons, hydrangeas, lilies of the Nile, and roses of all kinds growing in the open air, and all in full bloom. I have not been very well since my arrival. 'The Deputation' is expected to dine and breakfast, and attend tea-meetings and social gatherings, to such an alarming extent that it behoveth the Con-

ference to send only *suitable* men,—men of considerable powers of digestion.”

The Conference of 1862 met at Camborne, by far the smallest town in which it had ever assembled. But it was to be “a Cornish Conference,” and the ministers attending it found homes in half the towns of that hospitable and Methodist county. Nowhere in England could the assembling of the Conference move the entire community so deeply. To the public services at Camborne the people flocked from many miles around. They came, literally, in their thousands, from the farm, the mine, and the fishing boat, eager for sermon, prayer-meeting, or lovefeast. On the Sunday crowds filled the great chapels of Truro and Redruth, Falmouth and Penzance. On Sunday, August 3rd, Mr. Punshon was appointed to preach at Redruth, and the eager, sermon-loving Cornish folk poured into the town, and pressed toward the chapel. Nothing like it had been seen within living memory. As the people streamed along the streets, a simple maiden, lifting her hands in astonishment, exclaimed, “I did not think the world had so many people in it.” The chapel will seat some fifteen hundred persons, and it was intended to admit seat-holders before opening the doors to the general public. But the police, after a vain attempt, declared this to be impossible. The people could neither be resisted nor reasoned with. They climbed the railings and swarmed over the walls. One man broke his leg, and several others received slighter injuries. The doors were pushed open, and in a minute or two the chapel was crowded in every corner. One adventurous

brother hid himself in the pulpit, from which he was with difficulty dislodged. But still those without pressed round the doorways, and filled every way of approach. Under these circumstances it was felt to be impossible to hold the service. The crowd had, in fact, defeated itself. If Mr. Punshon was to preach at all, it must be out of doors. This solution of the difficulty was adopted. A stand was hastily arranged in an adjoining field, and it was announced that Mr. Punshon would preach there. The people flocked together; those who had fought their way into the chapel now fought their way out; and in a very few minutes some five thousand people joined in the opening hymn. There was now no danger of a panic, but the conditions for worship and the preaching of the Gospel were not very favourable. Mr. Punshon felt this, and needed much inward strengthening to fit him for his difficult task. As the first verse of the hymn was being read, some one in the crowd called out, "Mr. Punshon, sing short, we are very uncomfortable." But the restlessness subsided, and by the time the text was announced the people had ears to hear, and he was able to preach with freedom and power from Phil. iii. 13, 14, "Forgetting those things which are behind, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

The most important question, so far as Mr. Punshon was concerned, which came before the Conference of 1862, was that of Wesleyan Methodist chapels in watering-places. During the previous year the attention of the Home Missionary Com-

nittee had been specially directed to the matter. It was found that in many large and growing seaside places of resort, the work of Methodism lagged painfully behind. The want of chapel accommodation in some important towns, and its unsuitable character in others, presented an insuperable barrier to its progress. In Brighton, with its 100,000 inhabitants, there was but one small chapel in an obscure situation. The case of Hastings, Eastbourne, and most of the watering-places on the south coast, was as bad or worse. Other places where the need was similarly great were Llandudno, Rhyl, Bridlington, Bournemouth, Malvern, etc. The development of the watering-places of England and Wales during the last thirty or forty years has been, in its way, as notable as that of the most prosperous manufacturing districts, and mainly a consequence of it. And the rapid increase of population, whether at Crewe and Middlesborough in the one case, or at Llandudno and Bournemouth in the other, has afforded great opportunities to the Churches, and called for efforts on a larger scale than had previously sufficed. While the wants of the industrial towns were undoubtedly the greatest, much was being done for them in many ways; but it was difficult to devise any effective measures for strengthening the work of Methodism in places associated in people's minds with pleasure and ease, rather than with spiritual destitution as commonly understood. If this fresh call upon the sympathy and help of Methodists was to find response, it must first secure an earnest and an able advocate. It found this in Mr. Punshon. He discerned at once the importance of the issue,

and the possibility, if it were rightly handled, of turning it to great account. He saw the opportunity of strengthening Methodism on a side where it was weak, and, beyond and above that, of contributing to the agencies at work for the Christianising of the England of our day. He felt himself called to make an effort for which he had, perhaps, special qualifications. The ordinary modes of Connexional procedure seemed inapplicable, or at least inadequate. Why should not he take the whole question in hand himself? He could not forget how, three or four years ago, he had raised £1,000 for old Spitalfields Chapel. For this larger need might he not do a still greater thing? Gradually the matter took shape in his mind; he proposed the creation of a special fund for the erection and enlargement of chapels in watering-places, and offered, by private appeals to his friends and by public lectures, to raise the sum of £10,000 within five years, to be devoted to this object.

His proposal was brought before the Conference by the Rev. John Scott, an ex-President of great experience and sagacity. He read a letter from Mr. Punshon urging the creation of a special fund, and proposing, with the permission of the Conference, to devote a portion of his time to the raising of a sum of money, say £10,000, during the next five years. Mr. Scott moved that the offer be accepted, and permission given. The resolution was seconded by the Rev. F. A. West, another ex-President, who urged that Mr. Punshon's talents and influence were a gift from the Head of the Church which ought to be employed for the extension of the work committed

to Methodism. He knew the objections sometimes not unfairly brought against public lectures, but contended that they did not apply in Mr. Punshon's case.

The Rev. Charles Haydon hoped that they would stop short of killing Mr. Punshon by the burdens they laid upon him.

Dr. Rigg thought it would have been better if Mr. Punshon's offer had been made on behalf of the Theological Institution Fund, which stood in need of some such help.

Dr. Waddy said they had no right to tell Mr. Punshon what offer he ought to have made, and thought they should accept the one he had made.

The Rev. S. R. Hall feared that Mr. Punshon's proposal would bring him into collision with the Superintendents of the Circuits.

The Rev. Wm. Arthur thanked Mr. Punshon for his generous offer, and would accept it. He thought that the example of one man doing one great thing in his own way would be a seed bearing fruit after its kind, and would set other men doing other great things.

Dr. Osborn admired Mr. Punshon's spirit, but doubted whether the case required a special fund. He feared also that other funds would suffer, that the strain on Mr. Punshon would prove too great, and had his doubts moreover as to the value of lecturing in the long run.

Mr. Punshon said in reply, that he was aware of the abuses to which lecturing was liable. For himself he always endeavoured in his lectures to preach Christ, and he was prepared to defend the lecture as a means

of usefulness. Rightly used, it brought under good influences numbers of persons whom they could not otherwise reach.

The resolution was then put and carried, and the following minute adopted :—

“The Conference is convinced that any endeavour to advance the general interests of Methodism in most of the watering-places of our country must fail, unless some better chapel accommodation can be provided ; and that such accommodation is not likely to be provided in the ordinary way for years to come. The Conference, therefore, with hearty approval, accepts the offer of the Rev. W. M. Punshon, ‘to endeavour, by private solicitation or otherwise, to raise a Fund for the purpose of making grants to aid in the erection of chapels in those places of public resort to which many families of our people resort in summer, such Fund to be distributed by a Committee which the Conference shall appoint.’ And it hereby grants permission to Mr. Punshon to make such solicitation, with the consent of the Superintendents of Circuits.”

Thus was Mr. Punshon committed to the most arduous undertaking in which he had yet engaged. But he reckoned, not in vain, upon the help of God, and upon the good will of his brother ministers, upon the liberality of the people, and his own well-tryed powers. For himself he sought nothing but increased labours and heavier responsibilities ; on behalf of the Church he loved, “to his power, yea, and beyond his power, he was willing.”

LETTER TO REV. W. HIRST.

“CORNWALL WESLEYAN CONFERENCE, CAMBORNE,

“*July 31st, 1862.*

“We opened with a large number of preachers this morning. John H. James was elected, almost without competition, into the Hundred. For President, Prest had 230 votes, Osborn 24, Thornton 22. For Secretary, Farrar 225 votes, Thornton 19, Punshon 8, Bedford 6. We have had a glorious prayer-meeting. The prayers of Osborn and Thornton were accompanied with mighty power. There seems a wonderful spirit of hearing abroad amongst the people, and we had something like hysterical symptoms manifested in the prayer-meeting. I am sorely busy, so take all my love and believe me ever yours affectionately.”

LETTER TO THE SAME.

“CAMBORNE, *August 5th*, 1862.

“We are getting on very rapidly with business. I am bothered, vexed, embarrassed, everything but killed with it. . . . I had a fearful day on Sunday. When I got to Redruth I was told that I could not get near the chapel, that it had been filled for two hours by a clamorous crowd, who had scaled the walls and left the seat-holders outside. Nothing remained but to go into a field, to which I with reluctance consented, and preached to 6,000 people. A poor man had his leg broken in two places. This has a little unnerved me ; otherwise I am pretty well.”

JOURNAL.

“*August 23rd*.—Since I wrote the last entry in this book I have had the multiplied and wonderful experiences of the first Cornwall Conference, and have been brought home in health and safety. I would raise the grateful song for the manifold mercies of my heavenly Father. We have had a glorious Conference. The spirit of hearing has been poured out upon the people. Large gifts of the Holy Ghost have come upon the congregations, and it is to be hoped that the effects will be lasting. During the Conference, I think, I hope, I have grown in grace, though I still mourn my feebleness. I start another year with very earnest resolves to be the Lord’s fully, and I pray for prosperity and blessing. I have, in humble dependence upon Divine help, made an offer to the Conference to endeavour to raise £10,000 in five years, to give grants in aid of the erection of chapels in places of summer resort. I feel startled when I think of it, and apt to imagine that I have been presumptuous and bold ; but I trust by God’s help to succeed.

“*September 20th*.—I shall be glad, in some respects, when this Exhibition year is over ; there is so much distraction consequent upon frequent relays of visitors, that, although it is gladdening to see the faces of friends, one finds it difficult to maintain the contemplative spirit, and to meditate at each recurring eventide.

“*October 4th*.—Preserved in journeying this week, and, on the whole, in health, though seized in the pulpit on Thursday with a sudden faintness which had nearly overwhelmed me. Better somewhat in spiritual matters, and yet dissatisfied. I want, and must have, closer fellowship with God, and a more prevailing spirituality of mind. Some inquiries after salvation on Sabbath evening last.”

A few days later Mr. Punshon went to Paris to take part in the opening of the new chapel in the Rue Roquépine. For many previous years the work

of Methodism in Paris had been carried on, at great disadvantage, and at great cost, in a small hired building in the Rue Royale. But owing to a series of circumstances inviting, and almost compelling, a new departure on a larger scale, a site had been secured immediately adjoining the Boulevard Malesherbes, near the Madeleine. Upon this a building was erected that included a schoolroom and offices in the basement, a chapel above, to accommodate some eight hundred persons, and, over that, apartments for a minister. It was an onerous and costly undertaking, and the missionary committee hesitated, even after making a beginning, whether or not to proceed with it. But it seemed impossible to draw back without altogether violating the spirit, and breaking with the traditions, of Methodist missions. If there were difficulties to overcome, there was also a forward pressure of combining circumstances that was not to be resisted. In Paris, Mr. Wilson, and subsequently Mr. Gibson, who has given himself through so many devoted years to Christian work in France, laboured to bring the scheme to a successful issue; while in England Mr. Arthur was serving the cause in public and private, by his tongue and by his pen. A deep impression was made. In spite of other claims, numerous and heavy enough, the heart of English Methodism warmed towards this latest missionary venture, and its generous hand opened once more.

The chapel was built, and arrangements made for its dedication on Friday, October 17th, 1862. An excursion from London was organised by which more than a hundred friends and well-wishers of the cause went to Paris, and were present at the opening ser-

vices. At the first service, Dr. Osborn read prayers, and Mr. Punshon preached to a congregation of about four hundred persons from 1 Peter ii. 5, "Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house." On the following Sunday morning he preached again from Heb. ix. 13, 14, "For if the blood of bulls and goats," etc. Mr. Rattenbury occupied the pulpit in the evening, while Mr. Punshon preached in the afternoon at the American Methodist Episcopal Church.

From Paris Mr. Punshon, accompanied by one or two friends, visited Strasburg, Heidelberg, Mayence, and Cologne. From Cologne they went to Brussels, and next day to Calais, expecting to reach London the same evening. But the pleasant holiday journey was not to terminate without much discomfort and some danger. They left Calais in the steamer *Maid of Kent*, at 3.45 on Saturday afternoon. About seven miles from the French coast the engines broke down, and the boat was disabled. Meanwhile the breeze swelled into a gale, and the *Maid of Kent* was helpless in mid-channel. Hour after hour passed, and as night came on considerable anxiety was felt at Dover on account of the overdue steamer. Shortly before midnight a powerful steam-tug was sent out in search of her, but returned at 11 A.M. next day without any tidings. It was not until four o'clock in the afternoon that the *Vivid* mail steamer arrived in Dover harbour with thirty-five passengers on board, taken from the *Maid of Kent*, which she had left, with two anchors down, waiting for the weather to moderate.

JOURNAL.

"November 1st.—For some hours we drifted helplessly at the mercy of

the angry waters, save that there was a God Who restrained their fury. A night and day were thus spent in the deep, and we just escaped by God's goodness the terrible Goodwin Sands. . . . Oh that my spared life may be renewed in fresher dedication ! The Lord accept my vow, and strengthen me for its discharge."

The rumour of disaster to the *Maid of Kent* had spread very fast, but it was speedily followed by the assurance that Mr. Punshon had reached home in safety, and many gave thanks on his behalf.

The remainder of the year was spent in the customary labours of his busy life ; and in addition to these, another matter began to claim his sympathy, and to make demands upon his time and strength. The distress in Lancashire arising out of the " Cotton-famine," was assuming the proportions of a national calamity, and in such a case his was not the heart to seek exemption from the common care and sorrow.

JOURNAL.

" *November 15th.*—Much engaged during the week in preparing an appeal on behalf of the Lancashire distress. Felt drawn out somewhat in gratitude to think of my many mercies. Again humbled before the Lord because of my faithlessness.

" *November 29th.*—The anniversary of the day on which many years ago, after a protracted and cheerless seeking, Divine light broke in upon my soul. How unfaithful have I been since then ! How many privileges I have abused, and yet I am the Lord's, with a humble trust in Jesus ! I can say that I hope in His mercy ; that I am striving against sin ; that I would fain be absolutely free from its power. I dread indifference, I dread hypocrisy, I dread professional piety, I dread being reasoned plausibly into that which shall condemn, and I would, God helping me, watch over my own heart, and keep its issues diligently."

At the close of the year he reviewed the past with a chastened but grateful spirit. He spent a happy Christmas Day with his children and his sister-in-law, their second mother. He faced the new year, not

buoyantly, but with a calm trust in God, and a renewed consecration of himself to the service of Christ. Another important piece of work was nearly complete, and on the 10th January he writes :—

JOURNAL.

“Finished my lecture on *Wesley*. Very far from what I had hoped, but I have sincerely laboured to place him in a just light before the world. Lord ! I give it to Thy service, imploring Thy blessing upon its delivery. Exercised much about my eldest boy.

“*January 24th.*—During the week have parted with Morley and John William to school ; and have heard of the death of John Coulthard, in New Zealand, and of the serious illness of Mrs. John Vickers, at Thirsk. So life is made up ; parting and sorrow seem woven largely into it. But there is a life which abideth.”

This reference to his sons may serve to recall what is so easily forgotten, the sacrifice of family life involved in such a course as Mr. Punshon's. Father and children pay the price of this between them, and it is often the very costliest item in the sacrifice, as it is the one least considered by those who reap the benefit. Bodily fatigue, mental strain, the wear and tear of constant travelling and exhausting public services,—these can in some measure be estimated by those who watch a man's career ; but the privation to himself and his family involved in his frequent absence, the grievous attenuating of that happy intimacy between father and children which is joy to him, and health and safety to them—of this the world knows not, nor cares to know. The flying visits to his own home serve at once to renew and to disappoint his yearnings for closer and more continuous companionship with those he loves. They may disclose symptoms physical, mental, moral, that he would fain watch

over ; but he is due two hundred miles away to-morrow, and somewhere else the day after ; he is announced in Manchester, or expected in Bristol, he has to lecture in Birmingham, or preach in Hull, or attend the missionary anniversary in Leeds, and it will be late on Saturday before he sets foot on his own threshold again, wearied, and, it may be, burdened and depressed. And this goes on year after year, and the children pass from the nursery to the schoolroom, and thence out into the world, having had small possession of their father, with loss of much wholesome happiness, and oftentimes with loss of much beside. What it costs him thus to live away from his children he may perhaps be able to reckon ; what it may cost them it is beyond his power to compute.

Some glimpses of Mr. Punshon's thought and feeling for his children may be seen in his letters to his daughter, his much-loved, delicate little Fanny. He writes to her, a tiny child:—

“It is always a great pleasure to papa to hear of his little girl, whom he loves so very dearly, and he is very grateful to his kind friends who are taking such care of his only little girl. Fanny must be ready to leave Headingley next Monday, as papa hopes to go to Llandudno in Wales. I hope you are very good, and do not forget to pray to God through His dear Son Jesus to make you a good girl.”

Again, a year or so later :—

“GUERNSEY.

“I was so glad to receive your canny note. It was very nicely written, and very correctly spelt, except Gloucestershire, in which you left out the two letters that have the stroke underneath. This is such a beautiful island. The flowers are very fine, and the sea so blue, and the trees so green that it looks like a little paradise. It will be very nice to have ferns of your gathering.

“ Railway Carriage.

“ Many happy returns of the day to my own dear little Tibbie. May she grow stronger, and *better* year by year. That is the first thing papa says from *Warrington* on this memorable 4th of December.

“ The carriage is full of people. Besides papa and Aunt Fanny, there is a young lady, a gentleman, his wife, his servant, a little girl about three years old, and *such* a fat little baby. We are just leaving *Newton Bridge*. Aunt Fanny has just had a comfortable nap, and is as well as can be expected. I shall perhaps write a little more when I get to *Preston*. We have passed *Wigan*, and *Preston*, and *Lancaster*, and the *Junction* for *Kendal* and *Windermere*, and are now toiling up a steep incline over the *Shap Fells*. Our company have left us, so Aunt Fanny and I are alone in the carriage. It is quite dark outside, and I am writing by the light of the lamp in the carriage. We are now ‘going down hill,’ like *Betsy*. Poor *Betsy*! *Penrith* is passed, and we are hastening on to *Carlisle*. Oh, dear! it is rainy and windy. Much love, dear little Tibbie, from your papa.”

“ BRISTOL.

“ My darling child, may Heaven’s best blessing rest upon you on this birthday, and through the whole of your after-life. Many may wish this for you, but none so fervently as your own papa, who loves you so dearly, and who has prayed for you so often, and whose heart has been made not a little glad by your early decision for God. Taught by His good Spirit, you will not regard your birthday as a day of frivolous or light amusement, but of sober gratitude, of humiliation at the feet of Jesus, of loving trust in His atonement, and of new consecration to His service. Then all other joy,—of letters, of presents, of home and friends,—will be made more beautiful by the joy of the Lord. God has greatly favoured you, Fanny darling; many advantages are yours of which others know nothing, and many restraints from which others unhappily are free. Do not accustom yourself to take your mercies as matters of course, but recognise their Giver, the great bountiful Giver of all good. Determine this day that, by the help of God, you will strive against all that is indolent, and thoughtless, and selfish, and repining, and be a true disciple of Jesus Christ. God bless you, my beloved child, and make you a blessing for many years to come.”

On the 3rd of February, 1863, Mr. Punshon delivered his lecture on *Wesley and his Times*. Once again Exeter Hall was crowded in every part long before the appointed hour, and the enthusiasm of the hearers rose to its wonted height. It is indeed

almost surprising that he had not taken the subject before. It was one that appealed alike to his general and to his particular convictions. He held John Wesley to be the foremost man in modern Christian history; and if there was a greater and a better since the days of the apostles, he did not know his name. The Wesleyan tradition was to him one of unmingled sanctity and beauty, and he himself had come, in the providence of God, to fill a chief place in Wesley's community, and to be a representative to multitudes outside of the doctrines and of the institutions with which Wesley's name was associated. Nothing could be more fitting than that he should tell in his own way the story of Wesley's life and labours, and point the moral of his great career. Nor would it be easy to find a subject better suited to his powers. It furnished abundance of stirring and picturesque incident; the aspects of religious faith disclosed were those with which he was in deepest sympathy. Wesley's companions came next after their chief in his admiration and esteem, and to group them round that central figure was at once a moral and an oratoric instinct with him. The lessons to be enforced were just those of which his grasp was strongest, and, altogether, no subject could be found in whose atmosphere he was more accustomed to move, or with whose details he was more familiar. For the office of historical critic, or critical historian, he was, perhaps, disqualified by his personal love and loyalty toward Wesley, if by nothing else; but for portraying a noble character, and setting forth in glowing and impressive periods the rise and progress of the great Revival, he had qualifications altogether his own.

The lecture may be described as a series of pictures. They are as follows:—England in the early part of the eighteenth century,—The Rector of Epworth,—Susanna Wesley,—John Wesley's Conversion,—George Whitefield,—Charles Wesley,—A group of godly men,—Wesley's itinerant labours,—His character,—His many-sided work,—Application.

Of these pictures, probably the description of Susanna the mother of John and Charles Wesley, and that of Whitefield, left the deepest impression. The conclusion of the latter may be quoted:—

“All description must fail to make us realise his wonderful power, unless we could transfer the countenance, and fix the flashing eye and sweeping hand upon the page. And this power was not, as has been said, ‘the power of the cambric handkerchief or of the simulated tear.’ He could not help being an orator, but he aimed to be an evangelist; and so great was his success that he is said in one week to have received a thousand letters from those who had been blessed by his ministry. He had no great grasp of mind, nor was he born to organise or to command. ‘I hate to head a party. If I were to raise societies, I should only be weaving a Penelope's web.’ These were his words. When he went to Scotland he was received by the Associate Presbytery, who were about to elect a moderator, and proceed to business. ‘What about?’ he asked. They told him it was to set him right on some matters of Church government. He answered that they might save themselves the trouble; that his time was wanted for highways and hedges, and that, if the pope himself would only lend his pulpit, he would gladly preach the righteousness of Christ therein. His work was preaching, and he knew it. The pulpit was his throne, and never monarch filled a regal seat with kinglier presence. Worn down with labour, the physician prescribed a perpetual blister. He says he tried perpetual preaching, and found that it answered as well. When winter prevented his journeys he mourned like a smitten child; when spring opened his way he bounded to his beloved labour, glad as a gazelle upon the hills. His seal had for its device a winged heart, soaring above the globe, with the motto, ‘*Astra petamus*’; and this was emblematic of the business to which he had consecrated his life. ‘I hope to die in the pulpit, or at least soon after I come out of it. It is your cowardly Christians, who have borne no witness while they live, whom God honours at the last. I shall die in silence; my testimony has

been given in my life.' Such was his language as, after thirty-four years of labour, he gathered himself up for what proved a final discourse. For two hours, though he had recently suffered from the cruel asthma which destroyed him, he spoke with a pathos and power which he had never surpassed, to a people who lingered like the hosts on Carmel, and as if they knew that for another Elijah there awaited a chariot of fire. The pavement and entrance-hall of the house in which he lodged were thronged with people, who craved a parting word. Exhausted with his labours, he requested another minister to speak to them, and with the candle in his hand was ascending the stairs to rest. Suddenly he turned, and, as if with a sense of opportunity rapidly vanishing, and of moments more precious than gold, addressed them from the stairway, and paused not in his labour of love until the candle burned down into the socket as he held it in his hands. The next morning he was not. In the night the messenger came, and, like his Master, he ascended from the summit of the mountain of prayer. Such was George Whitefield, strangely reviled in his day, but whom time has amply avenged :—

" 'We need not now, beneath well-sounding Greek,
Conceal the name the poet dared not speak.' "

His praise is in all the Churches, and he belongs to them all. You can no more chain him to a sect than you can tame the libertine breezes or control the wilful spring. The works that follow the good man will keep his memory green, and cause his fame to grow, until world-wide as his benevolence and his ministry shall be the estimation in which he is held ; and ages yet unborn, as they read the marvel of his life, shall bless God for the prince of preachers, this noblest, grandest embodiment of the Revelation angel, who 'flies through the midst of heaven having the everlasting Gospel to preach to every nation and people and tongue.' "

The lecture was delivered a second time in Exeter Hall to a similar audience a fortnight later, the proceeds being devoted to his "Watering-Places Fund." About the same time he found it necessary to write to the *Watchman* and *Recorder* to contradict the report that he had already raised between £3,000 and £4,000 of the sum required. "He found the difficulties in the way quite serious enough without their being increased by the circulation of statements that would be very

gratifying if they were not so far in advance of the truth."

Among the "difficulties" to which Mr. Punshon refers was the "Cotton Famine," which told so heavily upon the resources of Lancashire, and at the same time drew upon the assistance of the whole country. To feed the hungry and clothe the naked was a Christian duty that took precedence, for the time being, of every other. The "Cotton Famine" was followed by the commercial panic of 1866; while, in addition to these losses sustained by the community at large, special and unexpected claims were developed within the bounds of Methodism,—claims that made strong appeal to the liberality of the people, and thus came into competition, almost into collision, with Mr. Punshon's undertaking.

It says much for his faith and courage that he neither abandoned his task, nor looked askance at the new schemes which made its accomplishment so much more difficult.

In spite of the burdens that weighed upon him, he gave the response of willing and effective service to the Jubilee Missionary movement of 1863, and the Metropolitan Chapel Building Fund of 1865. His answer to everything that hindered or complicated his task was:—

" Yet I argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer
Right onward."

Among the minor trials of his life, to which he would allude with mingled vexation and amusement, were the reporters who tracked him from place to

place. Few things disturbed him more when preaching than the sight of a shorthand writer, often just in front of him, notebook in one hand and swiftly-flying pencil in the other. It "froze the genial current of his soul" to see that unabashed professional at work, and to know that "unlicensed printing" would be the next stage of his larceny. Sometimes a sermon that he hoped to preach again was boldly taken from him by a verbatim report in the columns of a popular religious journal; or a botched and bungled version would appear that set his very teeth on edge by its vagaries of doctrine and atrocities of style. In the spring of 1863 some publisher thought fit to put forth a volume of extracts from his sermons, speeches, and lectures, under the title of *Life Thoughts*, by Rev. W. Morley Punshon. The only redress for what he felt as a grievance was to disclaim all responsibility for this production, and he wrote to the *Methodist Recorder* :—

"I know nothing of a volume entitled *Life Thoughts* which I am said to have issued from the press. My consent has not been asked for its publication, nor was any information given to me that it was going to be published."

JOURNAL.

"*January 31st.*—God bless my eldest boy on this his birthday. Teach his young heart Thy law, and incline him to love and serve Thee. A week of considerable work and steady trust in Christ. Father Hobson, of Taunton, suddenly summoned, as it would seem, from his knees to heaven.

"*February 21st.*—Privileged to re-deliver my lecture, and during this week to preach Christ at Bedford and Woolwich. Shocked and startled by the sudden death of John Clough, from epilepsy, on his way out to Sydney. Dr. Gunton, too, is suddenly snatched from his loving family at a time when he seemed most to be needed.

“March 7th.—A week of excitement. An exciting Book-committee meeting on Monday. Absent from home until Friday in Manchester, Bolton, and Liverpool, and to-day celebrating the public entry into London of the Princess Alexandra. Find it difficult amid these excitements to stay my soul upon God, though they have their uses and need not be unprofitable. It was something grand and yet solemn to see those masses of people, crowds upon crowds, and to ponder what each of them really is, and what each of them will become. . . . I am an enigma to myself.

“March 14th.—Pleased with my Bible-class yesterday. Not satisfied with the state of the Societies, though there has been a small increase during the quarter. I long for the baptism of the Holy Ghost upon our Church.

“April 25th.—Death is busy in the midst of us. Mrs. Powis interred to-day, and from her funeral I was summoned to the dying bed of Mrs. S——, who, a few hours afterwards, passed away. When I saw her she was in darkness, at least her light was fitful and troubled. She seemed, however, to be looking only to Jesus. Oh, how precious He is! What would become of us, poor, helpless, forlorn, doubting creatures, without Christ? Led to many searchings of heart on account of my own timid faith and many shortcomings. But Thou wilt not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax.”

The anniversary of the Missionary Society, whether Mr. Punshon took active part in its services or not, always interested him deeply. For many years his public work might be classified under three heads:—Preaching the Gospel, Lecturing, and the Advocacy of Christian missions. During his three years in the Islington Circuit, years of vast and varied labours, his journal shows that he addressed no less than fifty-five missionary meetings. The annual meeting in Exeter Hall seemed incomplete without him, and the officials learned that there was no better way of keeping the audience together to the last than to reserve Mr. Punshon for the closing speech. On these occasions he was accustomed to refer to the men who had been removed by death during the year. It was an instinct of his nature,

strengthened by the habit of years, that carried his thoughts to those who, since the last assembling, had been summoned to their rest. His reverent awe of death deepened rather than diminished as life went on, and whether it were an entry in his private journal or a public tribute to the honoured or beloved dead, it was never made without emotion. At the anniversary of 1862 he said:—

“I need only remind you that Thomas Farmer no longer smiles benignly at us from the right hand of the chair. I do not need to ask your sympathy on behalf of such men as Carter, Tindall, and Pearse. But the name I am about to mention is well known in the annals of the Wesleyan Missionary Society. When I think that he who bore it spent long years in the West India Islands; when I think that his shrewd, sagacious, telling testimony was given with effect before Committees of the House of Commons on the great question of slavery; when I think that he laboured long, assiduously, and well in our Methodism, I feel that I miss the sunny smile, the athletic intellect, the right noble soul of Peter Duncan.”

The following year there were other names to record.

“We are again reminded that at the roll-call there are some who do not answer to their names; and it would be unworthy of us if we were to forbear our tribute to the comrades who have fallen in the field, and over whom has been fired the solemn funeral gun. There are multitudes of hearts on both sides of the Atlantic, appreciative of rare manliness and unusual discretion, by whom the name of Joseph Stinson will not be suffered willingly to die. From the far Ceylon there has come lamentation over the grave of Daniel Gogerly, whose rare Oriental scholarship has made him famous even among those who opposed and derided his religion. I would not forget to-day that under the quaint old walls of Carisbrook Calvert Spencely has lingered out his life during the year—a brave soldier, too early smitten down. And, remembering my own first trembling appearance on this platform, I am led to sorrow that the blunt good sense and straightforward Yorkshire welcome of Thomas Wade will be heard in our meetings no more.”

JOURNAL.

“*May 29th.*—Thanks to the good Providence and Grace of God which

have brought me to the close of another year of my life. The retrospect awakens my deepest gratitude, and at the same time saddens and humbles me. How uselessly I seem to have lived ; how small the progress I have made in the inner life. . . . Out of the depths I cry to Thee, my own, my only, my all-sufficient Saviour.

“*June 27th.*—Blessed by the good Providence of God during a fortnight's absence in Ireland, where I have been attending the Irish Conference. Delivered in a railway accident which might have been, but was not, serious,—the tender to the engine getting off the line. Much impressed with the self-denial and cheerful sacrifice of the Irish preachers. On the whole, enabled to learn lessons which I trust may profit me. Spared to come home and find my dear ones in health. I would renew the expression of my gratitude to the God Who has preserved, and to the Christ Who has redeemed me.

“*July 9th.*—An article in the *Wesleyan Spectator* severely reflecting on my style of preaching, and insinuating that there is no food in it for the hungry, nor comfort for the sorrowful, nor edification for the perplexed or inquiring, nothing but sweet-meat preaching. My first thought, on reading this attack, I thank God, was ‘What can I learn from it?’ I am conscious that I am more likely to hear the truth from an enemy than from a friend. Closely searching my own heart, however, I cannot plead guilty to the charges ; and, as if to console me under an accusation as false as it is cruel, I received a most touching letter the same evening from a poor widow brought to God under my ministry of late.

“*July 25th.*—Incessantly at work, but enabled to keep my heart stayed upon God. John William Foster very dangerously ill of typhus fever. Busy preparing for Conference ; feel as if there could be but little pleasure, as our home is lost to us. Think of taking lodgings. Am down in the stations as Superintendent for next year. Lord ! help, strengthen, save.”

The Conference assembled in Carver Street Chapel, Sheffield, on the 20th July. Dr. Osborn was elected President, and Mr. Farrar Secretary. As one of the letter-writers, and financial secretary of the London district, Mr. Punshon was fully engaged throughout its session. He was able to report satisfactory progress with regard to his Watering-Places Fund, and a committee was appointed to administer it, as it was not thought necessary to wait until the entire sum was raised, before proceeding with its

distribution. Time was saved, and the objects for which the fund was originated were rapidly advanced.

The chief event of the Conference of 1863 was the scheme devised for celebrating the jubilee of the Wesleyan Missionary Society. That society was formed in Leeds in October 1813, and it was felt that the growth and influence of Methodist missions throughout the world during the fifty years called for special thanksgiving to God, and presented a fit opportunity for large and liberal extension of the work. The Conference heartily accepted the proposals for a jubilee celebration, and the feeling kindled and spread through the entire Connexion. All preparations were made, and early in October the jubilee movement was initiated by a remarkable series of services held in Leeds. On Sunday morning, October 4th, Mr. Punshon preached in Oxford Place to more than three thousand people, hundreds more trying in vain to gain admission. His text was Luke xxiv. 45-48, “. . . that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” In the evening he preached to another vast congregation in St. Peter’s Chapel. The following evening he heard the Rev. William Naylor preach at Armley, where, just fifty years before, the first sermon in behalf of the Wesleyan Missionary Society had been preached by the Rev. James Buckley. Mr. Naylor was the only surviving minister who had been present at that first service; and now, in the eighty-first year of his age, having completed sixty years in the ministry, the venerable man stood before a new generation to declare, on behalf of fathers who had passed away,

the wonderful works that God had done in their days, and in the old time before them. At the close of the sermon Mr. Arthur addressed the congregation, and a collection was made amounting to upwards of £800. Mr. Punshon remained in Leeds throughout that memorable week, and amongst the men who took part in the services were Mr. Thomas Jackson, Dr. Dixon, Dr. Osborn, Dr. Waddy, Mr. Arthur, Mr. Thornton, Mr. Prest. The jubilee movement was now well begun, but it had yet to be carried through the country, involving no slight addition to the burdens he was already carrying.

JOURNAL.

"*August 29th.*—Returned home last evening after five weeks' absence at Conference, and subsequently at Scarborough. Poor John William Foster died the day after I went to Sheffield, so that a gloom was thrown over our whole sojourn there. The Conference passed off well. The President did most admirably. The public services were well attended, and in many cases souls were converted to God. I was humbled and rebuked because the Lord blessed my own ministry. For the most part preserved in patience and purity, but on one occasion lost self-control, and spoke unguardedly with my tongue.

"*September 5th.*—A week of much activity, in connection mainly with ticket-giving in my own Circuit. My colleagues have arrived (Revds. Benjamin Frankland and Josiah Pearson). May God send us a prosperous year. Depressed by the low condition of the Society, and by the decrease in numbers. A partial *amende* in the *Spectator* so far as purity of motive is concerned. Men cannot think of me more lowly than I feel, but from the depths I cry to be made useful in God's hands, and fit for His presence for ever.

"*September 19th.*—A most extraordinary visitation of God in connection with a Ministers' Prayer-Meeting which we held at the Book-room on Monday to seek God's blessing upon ourselves and our congregations during the year. Surely the blessing will come after such an earnest. I question whether I ever heard anything equal in power to Dr. Waddy's prayer.

"*October 13th.*—During the whole of last week I was in Leeds, at the inauguration of the jubilee. It was a hallowed time. I felt unworthy to participate in the great doings. Oh! may the Lord make us who have

to take the banner, its faithful and valiant bearers. £30,000 raised without ostentation and without haste."

Before the close of the year he took part in the jubilee meetings held at Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield, Newcastle, and York.

JOURNAL.

"*November 7th.*—Very much engaged with the various jubilee meetings. A blessed influence in Manchester; £12,000 added to the sum formerly obtained. Good Dr. Camplin suddenly called away.

"*November 14th.*—Blessed in Liverpool at the jubilee meeting, and constrained to thank God for any knowledge of His will, and for the power of His grace. The 10th was to me a memorable day. I seemed to come nearer to my beloved one than I have been for some time, and to realise the companionship of 'the spirits of the just made perfect,' in 'coming to Mount Zion.'

"*November 21st.*—Travelling during the week. At the Sheffield jubilee meeting, and privileged to lecture in my native town, and stand by my mother's grave. Found J. W. ill in Sheffield, and Gervase very ill at Alwyne Road. Depressed by family trouble, and harassed by Church anxieties, but trying to stay myself in God. Much to contend against in my own heart, and with the world. But my springs are in the Lord.

"*December 3rd.*—Much engaged during the last week or two with jubilee and other services. Still troubled at home: servants vexatious, Fanny's health languishing. J. W. slowly mending—besides the care of all the Churches."

Mr. Punshon's appointment to the Islington Circuit terminated at the Conference of 1864, and the latter part of it was spent in the busy routine that was now so well established. As Superintendent he was more occupied in administration than heretofore, and his duties as Financial Secretary of the district brought him, at certain seasons of the year, great additions of work. Pressed by the requirements of his "Fund," he lectured more than ever, and with the exception of one or two enforced rests, did not relax for months together the strain of physical and nervous toil. He

was now in the prime of life, and undoubtedly possessed great strength, but he was drawing upon it too lavishly. The lifelong tendency to depression was strengthened by the exhausting reaction which from time to time followed his efforts, and brought him into morbid conditions of mind and body. Family affairs caused him much anxiety, and certain characteristics of his own inner life prevented his "being exalted above measure." Seldom has a man of such abounding popularity been more effectually weighted by burdens of which the world knew nothing.

Partly from stress of work, and partly from the causes just referred to, his journal was discontinued during the year 1864, with the exception of two or three brief entries at intervals of several months.

His letters to Mr. Hirst, who had removed to York, supply a few details of the period during which the journal is silent, and they show with what warmth of affection he clung to his friend and former colleague.

LETTERS TO REV. W. HIRST.

"March 10th, 1864.

"This letter means business. I have just heard that there *is* to be a Missionary Anniversary this year—a matter about which until yesterday I had some doubt, as nobody seemed to have heard a word about it; and as the D.D. which graces our present head might well be rendered Doctor Dubitantium, I thought it possible there might exist in the Presidential mind some jubilee reason for postponing the anniversary altogether. However, there is to be an anniversary, and it would not be complete unless you were present. Will you come? Bed; board for two, on the most ample scale that reduced circumstances will allow; the use of piano; the privilege of poking the fire and putting your feet on the fender; the extra privilege of taking your meals with the family; a flower for your button-hole, a bow for your wife's bonnet, a latch-key (under conditions), and the heartiest welcome in all London,—these are guaranteed, and respectable references given and required!

"Do come, there's a dear fellow. Fanny wants to see Mrs. Hirst (so do I); I want to see you (so does she), which must constrain your decision. Send me a speedy letter, saying a whole host of things, but ending with

" 'Yours for a fortnight,

" 'WILLIAM HIRST.' "

" June 6th, 1864.

"The unpleasantness at Hornsey Road is just as great as ever. I was there yesterday, and Mr. B—— opened up the matter. I spoke freely to him, and he proposed, in answer to my suggestion, that they should all have a personal interview, and that *you* should come up to settle it. He had confidence, they all had confidence, that if you would do this the reconciliation might be effected. I mentioned the matter to Mr. C—— last night. He lighted up at once at the thought of it. So now, my dear old friend, you have a plain duty before you, and a glorious chance of getting the blessing of the peacemaker. One other condition I append, which is, that you press our mattresses and are covered with our best white dimity on the occasion."

" June 27th, 1864.

"We hope now to lay the stone of Dalston Chapel on July 14th, when, if you please, you must come, without any excuses. We have bought Nos. 4 and 5 in the same terrace. The railway company will buy our ground, *if they get their Bill*, of which we must take the risk. It has passed through the Commons, and will, they hope, go through the Lords in about a month. We must pray that Lord Palmerston may live, and that nothing may dissolve the Parliament, or we shall be left with two lots of ground upon our hands."

" July 1st, 1864.

"I have pride and pleasure in forwarding the invitation of the Committee for the erection of the Dalston Chapel, that you will devote Thursday, July 14th, to them, on occasion of the laying of the foundation stone. It may be of interest to you to know that I have been overpowered by an adverse vote in the Committee; and, indeed, have been left in a minority of one. The resolution to which they have come, and against which I have battled in vain, is that I shall be the unworthy mason who is to lay the stone. If after this you do not come to the rescue I shall call you a traitor to our old friendship, and my dimity will feel itself slighted, and shiver with a counter-pain."

CHAPTER IX.

1864—1866.

CLIFTON.—Aged 40 to 42.

Removes to Clifton.—Preaches on “The Spiritual Wants of the Metropolis.”—Lecture: *Wilberforce*.—Travels on the Continent with Mr. Gervase Smith.—Journal.—Impressions of Missionary Work in Switzerland and Italy.—Speech on “the Jamaica Question.”—Ill Health.—Visits the Continent again.—Hopes and Fears.

THE Conference of 1864 met at Bradford, under the presidency of the Rev. W. L. Thornton. Mr. Punshon was appointed Assistant-Secretary, a laborious office which is generally part of the probation and apprenticeship of the chief Conference officials. The normal promotion of an Assistant-Secretary moves with steady current towards the chair.

He had now filled two appointments of three years each in a London Circuit, and, according to rule, could not receive another. The desirableness of retaining him in London was strongly felt, and there was a disposition in some quarters to try if the proverbial “coach and four,” so often driven through Acts of Parliament, could not be driven through a Conference regulation. The means of doing this lies in the subtle distinction by which many of the suburban circuits, though well within “greater

London," are not considered as "London Circuits" proper; the effect of which is, that while the minister who has "travelled" six years in London cannot be transferred, say from Islington to Southwark, or from Bethnal Green to Bayswater, he may, in the same circumstances, remove from Kensington to Hammer-smith, or from Chelsea to Wandsworth. In this way it is understood that while a principle is maintained, practical convenience is served. A new chapel had just been erected at Wandsworth, and it was constituted the head of a Circuit. No wonder its people turned a longing eye towards Mr. Punshon. Might he not accomplish a work at Wandsworth similar to that he had accomplished at Bayswater? A strong effort was made in the Conference to secure his appointment to the new Circuit. He himself was prepared to undertake the work if the Conference so willed; but when opinion on the matter seemed about equally divided, he felt that there was no sufficient reason for setting aside the arrangement already made with Clifton. Accordingly he was appointed to the Clifton Circuit, the Rev. Wm. Shaw being the Superintendent, and the Rev. J. Pearce his junior colleague.

His residence in Clifton led to some of his most close and valued friendships. The ties there formed were broken only by death. But on his arrival he was much depressed, and felt as though he had left his heart behind him. His six years in London had naturalised him to the life of the great city to an extent which he only discovered on removing from it. The centre of the nation's life, the centre of Churchadministration and influence,—he felt himself,

for a while at least, doubly exiled in taking up his abode a hundred miles from London. The feeling wore off as the interests of his new sphere of work disclosed themselves, and as he came to know the friends, warm-hearted and true as ever man had, by whom he was surrounded.

In its ordinary operation a minister's removal from one Circuit to another involves much inner dislocation and unhingeing, but in this instance there was the additional source of disquiet that for some weeks he was obliged to live in lodgings, until a suitable house could be secured.

LETTER TO REV. W. HIRST.

"MINCHINHAMPTON, *August 23rd*, 1864.

"We are rustivating here to great advantage amid some of the finest ordinary scenery in England. I have been two days house hunting. . . . I feel sick at heart about leaving Islington, and going into a new place. I am half disposed to repent coming to Clifton, but trust it will be all right. Many thanks to you for your kind letter and good wishes. You must pray for me and help me."

LETTER TO REV. T. M'CULLAGH.

"*September 19th*, 1864.

"I have no cottage in this wilderness, and for another week or ten days shall have no house, no books, no sermons, no study, 'no nothin','—'which I am in lodgings.'"

LETTER TO REV. W. HIRST.

"*September 29th*, 1864.

"We are grievously disappointed that you are not coming to Clifton, but you will come some time, will you not? We are just in our house, but in the uttermost muddle. It is comfortable, one of the most comfortable of *country* houses, but—it is not London. I have not been at all well since I came, and have had all the horrors of dyspepsia, but am gradually mending. It will be another month before we are settled."

LETTER TO REV. GERVASE SMITH.

"*November 5th*, 1864.

"We are, as you may have heard, renovating Grenville Chapel, and I am happy to be the medium of a very hearty invitation to you to assist

us at the opening services, by preaching at Grenville and Victoria Chapels on Sunday, December 4th.

"Gervase, my dear fellow, you *must* come to us. I believe that by extra diligence on the part of the Bristol tradesmen, we shall have our stair-carpet laid down by then, and all ready for sister Mary Ann as well as your worshipful self. On the following Thursday the bridge will be opened. I want cheering up. I am dull, and low, and poorly, and seem as if I should never be settled."

LETTER TO REV. W. HIRST.

"November 14th, 1864.

"Your dunning letter was very welcome this morning. I cannot do better than give you the same adjectives I gave Mr. Booth as an excuse for not writing.

"I am ill, busy, bothered, troubled, cross (in a pious way). My health has not been at all good since I came here, and the unsettlement and worry have upset me very much. We are nearly settled now, and I suppose I shall like it as well as I should like any place out of London. The people are very kind, the house as good as any I have had, the study better. The congregations are good. Mr. Shaw is slow and reserved. It is probable that whether he is President or not, he will leave next year. Will you come and be my young man? My great trouble, however, has been J. W. He blew himself up with gunpowder one Sunday morning at the College, just ten minutes after a lecture from the Governor about the powder question. I have removed him, and he is now at Mr. Vipond's. I am convinced he would do no good at the College. He is better, and will not be much marked, but it has been a sore trial to me. I have written Dr. Gunton's memoir, and written a sermon twenty six pages long for City Road. I have, therefore, been busy. That I could forget you, or think less of you, is not likely; but if you don't come down some time before next Conference, and see me at Clifton, I declare I'll try. . . . I am taking care of myself,—witness my work: to-morrow Newbury; Wednesday and Thursday, London; Friday, Swindon; Sunday, Bideford; Tuesday, Launceston; Wednesday, Weston; Thursday, Hill Top; Friday, Birmingham. Nothing on Monday, you see, nor on Saturday!"

The sermon referred to was prepared in the interest of the Metropolitan Chapel Building Fund, and delivered to a crowded congregation in City Road Chapel on the 16th of November, and again, by special request, three months later in Great Queen Street Chapel.

The Fund had been in existence some three and a half years, and during that time had promoted the erection of thirteen chapels. Its operation had disclosed to some of the more discerning leaders of the Connexion, such as Sir Francis Lycett and Sir William (then Mr.) M'Arthur, Mr. Arthur, and Mr. Punshon, the possibility of a new era of extension and influence for Methodism in London,—a possibility since realised on a very large scale.* It was now determined to lay the whole question of chapel-building in London before the people, to widen the organisation, and give a new impetus to the undertaking; and Mr. Punshon was requested to advocate it from the pulpit. The sermon which he preached will be found in the second series of his published sermons, under the title, *Spiritual Wants of the Metropolis*. An extract or two will show with what earnestness he threw himself into the subject, and with what power he pleaded on behalf of the great city.

“We are apt to talk loosely about London as a great city, and we have thought, perhaps until we have been bewildered, upon its size, upon its startling contrasts of wealth and want, of ostentation and outlawry, of charity and crime. But how few of us have any definite idea of the mass of our fellows who are daily living, hoping, toiling, suffering, and dying within the one hundred and twenty square miles of which London is composed! ‘A city?’ says a noted French writer;—‘no, it is a province covered with houses.’ And this is feeble to express its greatness, for there are twice as many souls in London as in the largest division of France, and a million more than in the most crowded county of England. Five times more populous than St. Petersburg, twice more than Constantinople, having two-thirds more inhabitants than Paris, and one-fourth more than even the hiving multitudes of Pekin, the mind fails

* Up to the Conference of 1886, the Metropolitan Chapel Building Fund had assisted in the erection of sixty-eight chapels in London and its suburbs.

to comprehend it, the brain recoils from the contemplation of the sum. How shall we get to understand it? Weigh it with kingdoms. The Kings of Hanover, and Saxony, and Würtemberg do not, any one of them, reign over as many subjects as our Queen rules in this her chief city of London. Try it by its own growth. We do not ask you to go back to the time when Druids drank at the Wallbrook, and when the Fleet was a rushing water in which Saxons were baptized, and on whose bosom floated navies of merchantmen. Come to later times. When John Wycliffe lived, a light shining in a dark place, there were not so many people in all England, by half a million, as will sleep to-night in London.

“There are every night homeless ones wandering through its streets, or huddling to its refuges of charity, equal to the population of many a thriving village, and of more than one Parliamentary Borough; while, if the houses which hold its population were put side by side, you would have one continuous street, with the tenants at one end listening to the chimes of York minster, and the tenants at the other end slumbering under the shadow of the Pyrenees. Think of it by its periodical increase. If it were supposable that all who come into London in a year were to be drafted thither from one place, then, in a single year, Guernsey would be like Tyre in her ruin, ‘desolate, and without inhabitant;’ the lovely Isle of Wight would in two years be an Eden with scarce an Adam to till it; and several Scottish shires would have their broad acres cleared, one after another, as effectually as feudal laird could wish. Conceive it by its daily waste and supply. Every eight minutes throughout every day of every year a soul departs out of London to its account before the great Judge; but the havoc of death is more than neutralised by the greater marvel and activity of life, for in every five minutes in some London household a child is born. And finally—to bring home to you the vastness of this little world—remember, that out of every thousand people the great world has in it two of them are Londoners, and that if its inhabitants were drawn up in marching order, walking two and two, the line would stretch for six hundred and seventy miles, and at the speed of three miles an hour it would be nine days and nights before the last of the long procession had swept by. And it is *this* London for which we plead—vast, bewildering, terrible—with a hum and tramp of sound which deafen us, but which swell up to God—a voice of need which yearns for a succour that it cannot find—a voice of sorrow wailing before the All-Merciful One, which surely moves His heart to say, as erst of Nineveh, Should I not spare that great city, wherein are more than six-score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand?”

The plea for an earnest effort to bring the power

of Christianity to bear upon the population contains the following :—

“It has been said that the highest life is developed in cities ; that amidst their opportunities humanity grows to its tallest intellectual stature ; and that from their attritions mind is sharpened into its keenest brightness. Be this as it may, it is certain that the moral nature is in cities exposed to its fiercest trials ; and where the influence of numbers can so easily be realised, the dangers of its perversion become proportionately greater. Where desperate men herd together in masses they have the greater power of mischief. Hence, if there be no Christian teaching, no leavening of the city with the hidden virtue of the Gospel, there is danger to the Commonwealth—danger to peace, character, property, life. A high morality, a healthy public sentiment, is the only political safeguard of a city like London. It is for the weal of the state, then, to multiply your temples of worship, where the rich are taught to be lowly, and the poor to be contented ; where each is reminded that he has duties as well as rights ; and where the altar is shown to be the surest safeguard to the throne.

“And this is not a matter to which the provinces should be indifferent. It has been acutely said that ‘France is the nation of a great city, but that London is the city of a great nation.’ Everywhere, to the farthest verge of the green isles, there are relations with London. The provinces send up of their fairest, of their most gifted, in ceaseless immigration ; and the re-action is almost equal, for it is said to be rare to meet with a Londoner of the third generation. The fortunes made there are spent in the country ; and thus the mighty tide of life is ceaseless in its ebb and flow. Brethren, I commend to you the work of this and like societies for your country’s sake. The truest ‘substance’ of the land is ‘the holy seed.’ Let the Word of God sound out in your streets. Get your youth impressed with the power of the Gospel. You will do your country a better service than to line her fields with armies, or to make her seaboard bristle with cannon. You will raise up for her a defence surer than that of crag or bastion—you will girdle her round with a rampart of sanctified mind.”

This appeal was delivered with the customary energy and power, and produced a deep impression. Its argument taken as a whole, and in most of its details, is as applicable, to say the least, to the Church’s work in the London of to-day as it was then.

Before the year closed he addressed a letter to the *Recorder* on the subject of his Watering-Places Fund,—a burden and a responsibility which was with him constantly, whatever else might come and go.

“I am somewhat afraid lest, among the noble enterprises which our Church is undertaking, my friends may forget the one in which I am specially interested. The necessity for a better state of things in connection with Methodism in our watering-places is admitted on all hands. The energy with which schemes of improvement have been projected nearly all round the coast, with the hope of assistance from the fund which it is proposed to raise, shows that the need is felt, and that the movement has been entered upon at the right time. The zeal of our friends is indeed somewhat excessive, as some of the applications are based upon the definition of a ‘Watering-Place’ as a place where there is water. The committee have considered about twenty cases already, and nearly half the entire £10,000 has been conditionally granted.

“I could scarcely have prophesied the Lancashire distress. I thought the Metropolitan Chapel Building Fund was pretty well floated, and I had forgotten the Jubilee. I mention these things, not to constitute an appeal *ad misericordiam*, but to explain why the work has been a little ‘let hitherto.’ My removal from London has of necessity narrowed my chances both of access and success, and though I have no wish, and no need, to sue *in formâ pauperis*, I have no objection that my friends who have a good will to me and my work should step in and lighten my labour.”

LETTER TO REV. W. HIRST.

“January 21st, 1865.

“I have wanted to write to you for a long time, but have not seen my way until my lecture was finished, which desirable event took place last evening; but it is a dry, prosy affair, and will do me no credit, I fear. I have written it twice over, because I made it too long, and had to condense terribly. It will be delivered in Leeds (D.V.) on February 24th. If you can get a bed, I will send you a ticket, that is, if you would deem it worth coming so far to hear. . . . Well, I suppose the newspapers will be still for a while now. Having made Mr. Tennyson a baronet, married the Princess Mary, and sent me to Australia, they have committed slaughter enough for one vacation surely.”

“January 26th, 1865.

“I tried the lecture at Warminster on Tuesday. (As I don’t think your geography has gone so far, permit me to tell you that it is in

Wiltshire, and a Circuit town !) It is, as I said, a simple story, nothing to create much enthusiasm, scarcely anything which can be called a climax, no pretension, little poetry, but written in a plain, clear style, with an unwonted number of Saxon words."

The lecture referred to was entitled *Wilberforce, his Life, Work, and Fellow-workmen*. After the preliminary trial at Warminster, it was delivered in Exeter Hall, on February 7th, 1865. In spite of his modest disclaimer, *Wilberforce* was pitched throughout on as high a level as *Macaulay* or the *Huguenots*—the lectures with which it will naturally be compared. The crowd that filled every corner of the hall was as eager, as susceptible, as responsive as ever. There was all the range and variety of narrative and portraiture, of humour, pathos, and declamation, to which people were now so well accustomed, and no diminution of the power with which they wrought upon the hearers. One who was present writes, "I have never seen such an audience held by such an irresistible spell for two hours."

Plunging into his subject with an artistic and effective abruptness, he pictured the spectacle of a funeral procession wending its way through the vast crowd to Westminster Abbey. Among the pall-bearers were the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Lord High Chancellor, and one of the princes of the blood. Among the mourners were members of both Houses of Parliament, bishops of the Church, and ministers of the state, men the highest in rank, and the most renowned in fame. Nor were these gorgeous obsequies the only tribute paid to WILLIAM WILBERFORCE on the

day of his burial. In the language of his son, "It was his nobler portion to clothe a people with spontaneous mourning, and to go down to the grave amid the benedictions of the poor."

Beginning, then, the story of his life, he sketched the earlier days of William Wilberforce, his boyhood, college course, and entrance into Parliament a few weeks after his twenty-first birthday. 'The rise and progress of religion in his soul'—to describe the great spiritual change through which he passed in the words which are the title of Doddridge's well-known work, the main instrument in his conversion—is described with sympathetic warmth. That which was lacking in the life-history of his other hero, Macaulay, gives the key to that of Wilberforce, and becomes the ruling influence of his whole career; and it was this which gave Mr. Punshon free and unqualified delight in his theme, instead of an admiration that was mingled with pain and embarrassment. The thoroughness of Wilberforce's religious decision gave occasion for one more utterance in the strain which recurs in his addresses perhaps more frequently than any other,—the duty of confessing Christ, and openly assuming the life of discipleship :—

"With the accidents of birth and station in his favour, with youth upon his side, fortune at his feet, and fame and power within the grasp of his outstretched hand—when life was in its summer, and he was compassed, so to speak, with its gladness, and music, and flowers—with everything at hand which it is deemed the most costly to surrender—he stepped forth in the sight of the world, for which his name had already a charm, took the crown of his manhood, and laid it humbly at the feet of Christ. I can see in the act a courage of that sort which is the truest and rarest, but which is, notwithstanding, within the reach of you all. The true idea of power is not embodied in Hercules or Samson, brute

forces with brute appetites, takers of strong cities, but slaves to their own passion. Nor is it in the brave soldier who can storm a fortress at the point of the bayonet, but who yields his manhood to the enticements of sinners, and hides the faith which the scoffer's sneer has made him frightened to avow. The real power is there when a man has mastered himself, when he has trampled upon the craven and the shameful in all their disguises, and when, ready on all fit occasions to bear himself worthily among his fellows, and 'give the world assurance of a man,' he dares to say to that world, the while it scorns and slanders him, 'I will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.' "

Wilberforce's parliamentary life gave the lecturer opportunity for introducing a series of vivid and telling sketches of the foremost personages in the House of Commons. It will be remembered how his boyish fancy had been kindled by reading parliamentary debates, and the early passion for political oratory was renewed by every provocation that after-years administered. There was no recreation that he loved better than an evening in the gallery of the House; and a great speech, whether from the Speaker's right or left, always found in him an eager, interested reader. It was a congenial task, then, to draw upon his long-cherished visions and imaginings, and portray the historic forms of Pitt and Fox, of Burke and Sheridan, of Erskine and Canning.

From the House of Commons, the scene of Wilberforce's more brilliant achievements, he passed on to make mention of the essay on *Practical Christianity*, in which Wilberforce became a fellow-worker with the leaders of the Evangelical Revival, and did service second only, if indeed second, to that which he accomplished in the abolition of the slave-trade. This, too, was a con-

genial theme, and well-known facts and familiar religious truths received fresh and vigorous statement.

The latter part of the lecture describes Wilberforce's labours for the abolition of slavery and the slave-trade. The Bill which finally abolished slavery throughout the British Empire, and thus brought Wilberforce's great work to a triumphant issue, was introduced into the House of Commons by Lord Stanley a few weeks before Wilberforce died :—

"For nearly four hours the House listened unwearied till at the close the following tribute roused them to irrepressible enthusiasm :—' Sir, what will be the joy of that venerable man, now lying, it is feared, on his deathbed, who, for so many years, through evil and through good report, firmly and consistently laboured in the cause of the slave? The language of that venerable man will surely be to-night, in the last words of the prophet, " Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word : for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." ' These words were at once a homage and a prophecy, for the Bill was read a second time on Friday, July 26th, and on the following Monday the veteran Christian entered into the joy of his Lord. Thus, within the short period of one man's life, by the blessing of God upon the efforts of persevering goodness, were achieved two of the noblest triumphs of humanity,—triumphs which redeemed colour from the catalogue of crime, and which gave the right to seven hundred thousand of our fellows, made in the image of the same dear God, to stand up in the face of the world, no longer chattels, but with the words on every lip, ' I myself also am a MAN.' "

After being delivered in Exeter Hall on February 7th, the lecture was delivered a second time in the same place on March 7th. Within a few weeks he also gave it at the Victoria Rooms, Clifton, and the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, at Cardiff and Swansea, at Bath, Birmingham, Leeds, and Hull.

The journal which had been discontinued for

nearly a year is now resumed, though the entries are irregular and "far between."

JOURNAL.

"*February 18th, 1865.*—A long time has elapsed since I made an entry in this book, and the months which have intervened have been months of considerable mental exercise. I have removed from London, and am stationed in Bristol. This was a trial. The decision, at least finally, rested with myself, and I believe, in the sight of God, that I chose to leave London because I wished to stay in it, and hoped that I might be more likely to be in God's way by denying myself.

"*March 11th.*—God has visited our Church with a sore trial. Dear, wise, loving Mr. Thornton, our beloved President, was on Sabbath last suddenly summoned to his rest. The shock is great. It is nearly fifty years since a President died during his year of office. Mercifully prepared for the news by a blessed Sacrament last Sabbath evening, but almost overwhelmed by it.

"*March 18th.*—An impressive funeral sermon for the President on Wednesday evening. Much affected in reading the memoir, which it fell to my lot to prepare."

An article in the *Sunday Magazine* by Dean Ramsay, containing references to Methodism that wounded Mr. Punshon and many others, drew from him a protest which he forwarded to Dr. Guthrie, the editor. This led to a friendly interchange of letters, the character of which may be gathered from the following, which brought the incident to a close :—

LETTER TO DR. GUTHRIE.

"*February 13th, 1865.*

"Allow me again to thank you cordially for the spirit of your letter, and to regret that it should seem a duty to give you the slightest annoyance or pain. I did not write to remonstrate against Dean Ramsay's article solely on my own motion. Since I received your letter I have asked the opinion of several of my brother ministers, and of our intelligent and thoughtful people, whose names, if I were to mention them, would not be unknown to you ; and they all concur that the impression likely to be made on the minds of those not acquainted with Methodism by Dean Ramsay's article would be anything but favourable ; while, on the

minds of our attached friends, the result of its perusal would be to awaken distrust, not of Methodism, but of the *Sunday Magazine*. I am anxious that neither of these things should come to pass ; hence my respectful protest.

“The feeling of my friends seems to be that they have cause of remonstrance (I would not say complaint) on two grounds.

“1. That the oddities and ignorances of fifty years ago are accepted by the Dean as fair representations of the Methodism of to-day. And,

“2. That there pervades the entire article an assumption of superiority, not the less grating because intangible, a sort of patronage of Methodism as a very good thing in its way, but by no means entitled to the courtesy of being called a Church ; which may be well enough for Dean Ramsay, but which we think as much out of place in the columns of a neutral magazine as if I were to write an article on the escapades of drunken clergymen, or to hash up for a religious periodical the revelations of ‘Jupiter Carlyle.’ I write with all frankness and with all affection.”

During the first half of 1865 Mr. Punshon’s labours were on the usual scale. For weeks together every evening except Saturday was occupied, either by work in his own Circuit, or by engagements at a distance. On three successive evenings of one week he lectured on *Wesley*, *Daniel*, and *Wilberforce*. In April he went on a Missionary Deputation to West Cornwall, preaching five times, addressing seven meetings, and lecturing once, in less than a fortnight. The following month he took part in the Missionary Anniversary in London, preaching at Great Queen Street and Spitalfields, and speaking at Exeter Hall.

But as the year advanced his health and spirits began to give way. The strain of his work was once more telling upon him, and he had reason to fear that to each return of old symptoms he was able to offer less and less resistance. Early in May he writes to Mr. Hirst :—

“Here I am, invalided, unstrung, a worn-out minister, obliged to rest on my oars for awhile, with a nervous system somewhat shattered, and a cough, bad throat, etc.”

A week later :—

“I am quite knocked up, and fear I must rest. My nerves seem quite shattered.”

“*May 13th.*—Much in labour since I last wrote ; so much that I am pretty well worn down with it, and feel a renewal of many of the symptoms which afflicted me four years ago. Obligated to take partial rest. Suffering from skin disease which makes me irritable, throat weakness, and lack of nervous power, which are hindering to my work.”

During the next few months he was able to do very little. Nearly the whole of June was spent in Devonshire. In August he visited Scotland, and towards the end of September, accompanied by his friend Gervase Smith, he left home for the Continent.

JOURNAL.

“*October 30th.*—The past six months have been months of severe trial. I have been ill with a strange nervous ailment which has effectually crushed the *joy* of life. I have been most kindly treated by my brethren, who have allotted me an assistant, and honoured me with their confidence by putting me into the chair of the Bristol district. I have just returned from a five weeks’ ramble in Switzerland, Italy, and Germany, which has revealed to me more of the beauty of God’s works than I ever saw before. Death has come very near me within the last few months. Mr. Weston, Edwin Hall, Mr. Edward Heaton, poor Frank Parkin, my cousin Morley Clough, and now, within the last few days, Jane Coulthard, my dearly loved sister-in-law, all are gone—some with affecting suddenness, some after protracted suffering. I have seemed to live lately as in the very shadow of death. There is some danger, I fear, lest the influence of these many bereavements should paralyze the activities of life with me. I feel as if the heart to work, or to take interest in the things of life, were gone, while I could brood morbidly over the eternity that is coming. I want a more realising faith—a faith to which there is *no* darkness in the future. Shall I ever possess it? Is it attainable by me, or am I to walk in shadow that I may be kept pure and humble, this traitor heart of mine not being fit to be trusted in sunshine? Lord, increase my faith!”

Mr. Punshon’s journal of his travels on the Continent is remarkably full and detailed ; so much so that only extracts from it can be given here. It fills

a large volume, and is copiously illustrated with photographs of the places visited, and of celebrated buildings and pictures. The zest with which it was prepared and put into a most attractive form, was eminently characteristic. Few men enjoyed travel more. The majestic and the beautiful moved him to intense delight, and historic associations never failed to quicken his imagination. His moralising was not laboured or artificial. It was natural to him to move swiftly "from the things that are made" to "the invisible things" of their Maker. His admiration and wonder were devout faculties, and must needs pay their homage to God when awakened and exercised by His works. For these and some other reasons his "Journal of Travel" has considerable biographic interest, illustrating as it does the free movements of his mind when taking recreation, and certain prevailing tendencies of thought and feeling.

JOURNAL OF TRAVEL.

Friday, September 22nd, 1865.—With mingled feeling, sorrow at leaving my dear ones, and excitement which I could hardly repress in prospect of another spell of travel, I left home at 2.55 p.m., commending all I love to Divine and promised care. I arrived duly at 47, City Road, having to carry my '*bagages*' for about two hundred yards, because of the taking up of the roadway, which at present confines my friend's landscape to bricks, mortar, and graves. To some minds the most interesting thing about my tour would be the fact that, at the beginning of it, I slept in the house in which John Wesley died, and within a few yards of the place where all that is mortal of him and fifty of his helpers—'a knot of bonny dust'—lies waiting the resurrection morn.

Monday, September 25th.—In the deep crimson of a gorgeous sunset we entered Brussels, and were soon housed in the Hôtel de l'Europe. After tea we sallied forth, and found that we had an unexpected chance of seeing 'the beauty and chivalry' of Brussels. The streets were lined with people, all intent upon merriment, many, alas! sinning to secure it. There were more drunken people than I ever thought to see in a continental city. The *cafés* were brilliantly lighted and densely crowded, and

the whole scene presented a fair picture of the thoughtless outside life of this miniature Paris. We saw the cathedral in dim outline only, passed through the grand Arcades, and gazed with great admiration upon the superb front of the Hôtel de Ville.

"September 26th.—At 9.45 we started for Waterloo, and drove quietly along a somewhat uninteresting road, skirting the edge of the Forest of Soignies, which Byron has, by poetic licence, identified with the ancient Ardennes. After a drive which seemed long to our impatience, we reached the villages of Mont St. Jean and Waterloo, where fancy could people the field where, though for a season 'the red rain made the harvest grow,' the land has ever since been desolate, as if smitten with the curse of Cain. We went into the church of Waterloo, and gazed upon the tablets of many who fell in the battle, amongst which that of Colonel Ponsonby, and of the 'young, gallant Howard' whom *Childe Harold* mourns, attracted me most. Arrived on the field, we went first into the museum, kept by Sergeant Mundy, who announces its contents with the pardonable garrulity of age. It is interesting to those whose faith is not languid, and, so far as many of its treasures are concerned, to all. Having engaged a guide, we ascended the Lion Mound. From this elevation we could see the road to Nivelles; straight before us the road along which Blücher led his forces to the field, and along which Napoleon gazed so wistfully, with the '*Est-ce Grouchy, ou est-ce Blücher?*' often on his lips; behind us *Mont St. Jean*, and the village of Waterloo two miles away; yonder, the position of the French, and here the English army; here the spot where the gallant Scotch Greys fell, there the Gordon monument, and that to the Hanoverians, the only two on the field; that mean-looking house, *La Haye Sainte*, where the battle waged so fiercely,—that white one with the trees near it, *La Belle Alliance*, where the allied sovereigns met. The interest culminated when we stood upon the spot, or thereabouts, whence, from their impatient ambush, the Guards flashed to their final charge, and when we walked through the château and orchard of *Hougomont*, and saw the remnant of the wall which the French tried in vain to pierce, and the defence of which may be said to have decided the fortunes of the day. Lover of peace, and preacher of peace as I am, I confess to a fleeter rush of blood through the veins as I stood where

" 'In pride of place the kingly eagle flew,
Then tore with bloody talons the rent plain,
Pierced by the shaft of banded nations through!'

"September 27th.—*Luxembourg*. The fortifications are very extensive. It seemed like breaking a fly upon a wheel to have line upon line of earthwork and solid masonry to defend a spot like this, for except that it might be a key to other positions, it would offer but small temptation to

an invading army. An inscription over one of the city gates took my fancy, and I here transcribe it :—

“ ‘ Si le nom de Marie dans ton cœur est gravé,
Passant n'oublie de lui dire un Avé.’ ”

The outward symbols of devotion are not scarce in Luxembourg, for almost every street contains images of the Virgin or the Saviour.

“ *September 28th.—Strasburg.* We went to the cathedral, and were just in time for the twelve o'clock celebration on the wonderful clock. The cock crowed as lustily as when I heard him three years ago, and the apostles were as profound in their obeisance as they passed their Master. We admired the exquisite porch and entrance door into the choir, and all my enthusiasm was rekindled by the glorious west front, which, for delicacy and beauty of architecture, impresses me more than anything I have seen.

“ *September 29th.*—The road to Lucerne passes, on both sides of the line, through scenery of a most beautiful character, amply repaying us for short rest and ‘Castalian cheer.’ On emerging from the tunnel at Laufelfingen, the prospect which should have greeted us was shrouded by the mist of the morning. At Wanwyl station we have a grand view of the Oberland range, peak rising upon peak in fantastic outline, many of them capped with snow. After passing Sursee, an old walled town, we skirt the west shore of the Lake of Sempach, on whose eastern bank was fought one of the famous battles which gained Swiss independence. It was in this battle that Arnold von Winkelried opened a passage for his countrymen by gathering into his own bosom as many Austrian lances as he could grasp. Four crosses mark the spot where he fell.

“ ‘ He, of battle-martyrs chief,
Who, to recall his daunted peers,
For victory shaped an open space,
By gathering, with a wide embrace,
Into his single heart a sheaf
Of fatal Austrian spears.’ ”

The Rigi and Pilatus soon afterwards came in sight, and we steamed into the station of Lucerne.

“ I think that the most vivid impression of perfect beauty which I ever received will, in all after-memory, be linked with my first view of Lucerne. I was like one in a trance. It was impossible to analyse the emotions which thrilled me, or to describe the combinations of loveliness which called them forth. I simply record the fact, and am thankful, deeply and devoutly, that I have been permitted to look upon this scene.

“ *Sunday, October 1st.*—The Sabbath has dawned, and the impression

of calmness, beauty, majesty, sublimity awoke again with the first vision of the opening day. The trains disgorge their thousands, and the steamers ply as usual, painfully reminding us that the Sabbath is more a holiday than a holy day. We found from the bills in the hotel that the Church of England service for October was to have been taken by the Rev. C. E. Oakeley, but instead of preaching Christ among His most exquisite earthly works, he has been called, in manhood's prime, to 'see the King in His beauty, in the land that is far off.' We went in the morning to the English church. The service was profitable, though the sermon was *thin*. The good man seemed to apologise for the insinuation that there might possibly be sinners in his congregation, or, to use his words, 'those who were leading inconsistent lives;' but he gave them some words of warning on the shortness of time.

"In the afternoon we went to the Cathedral of St. Leger, where service was going on. There was a bishop present, and the ceremony was imposing, and the music fine. From the church we went to the cemetery, and witnessed a burial. The scene was impressive, and was rendered painful by the loud wail of women 'mourning for their dead, and refusing to be comforted.' In the evening we walked on the promenade in front of the lake, upon which a brilliant moon was shining. Here, for the first time for years, I essayed rhyming in the following

"LINES, LUCERNE, October 1st, 1865.

"O sweet Lucerne, thou art to me
A spell of tenderest memory,
For ne'er on my enchanted eyes
Did lovelier scenes of beauty rise
Than I—attent—delight to see
This quiet Sabbath eve in thee.
The lake, whose bashful waters gleam
Beneath the moon's enamoured beam,
The quaint old bridges, storied o'er
With annals of the gone-before;
The wooded slopes, e'en to their crest
With fruitfulness and plenty drest;
The Kulm, that, queen-like, sits and shines
Encompassed with her zone of pines;
And those far Alps, which from their height
So pure, so cold, so still, so bright,
Look down upon this nether earth
Like creatures of a higher birth;—
Surely the mercy of the Lord
To man this Eden hath restored,

Faint image of that primal one
 In which He walked at set of sun.
 Let these my silent teachers be,
 The woods, the hills, this waveless sea.
 For beauty, rightly read, hath much
 The mind to inform, the heart to touch ;
 God speaketh oft from Nature's lips
 In mute but glad apocalypse,
 Glory on Tabor resteth yet,
 And Heaven is nigh to Olivet.

* * * * *

May not the lake's unruffled calm
 Sing to the troubled heart a psalm,
 And speak of those 'still waters' where
 He leads the objects of His care,
 Who wipes the tears His chosen weep,
 And 'giveth His beloved sleep' ?
 As of the storm it bears no trace,
 Locked in the mountain's fast embrace,
 Scarce dimpled by the moonbeam's smile,
 Nor stirred by quivering wing the while,
 Can it not bid thy tumult cease,
 And to thy lone heart whisper 'Peace' ?
 Hush, hush thy grief, no more repine,
 Take the blest teaching, it is thine."

" *October 4th.—The Staubbach Fall.* I was benefited in this instance by pitching my expectations rather low, for I was neither prepared for the quantity of water, for the height of the fall, nor for its exceeding beauty. The wind catches it just after its leap from the crest of the rock, whirls it about as if in play, and scatters it so far that in one part no continuity can be discerned ; but it gathers again, and pours its rejoicing waters into the clefts below. While we gazed, the wind changed for a moment and the current of the fall was diverted about fifteen or twenty feet. We were delighted also to see the shadow of the fall upon the rock behind it, and two of those wonderful rainbows which can only be seen on a Swiss waterfall, in a clear sky, with a rising and almost vertical sun.

" *October 5th.—Berne.* We came first to the ogre-fountain. The ogre is in the act of devouring a child, and has several others tucked into his pockets, preparatory to their being tucked in elsewhere. We visited the cathedral, a fine building, with some excellent wood carvings in the chancel, the prophets on one side, Christ and His apostles on the other. The carving is admirably done, but the likenesses can hardly be true ones, as they have made Isaiah look like a fool, and Ezekiel like the landlord of

a public house, while Jeremiah is an unmistakable warrior, and John the Baptist, that child of the desert, is sleek as a London alderman, or a *valet-de-place*. We went to the platform from which there ought to have been a good view of the Bernese Oberland, but we could scarcely see the outline of a hill. It is said (in the Swiss Apocrypha), that a student once leaped the parapet wall of this platform on horseback; the horse was killed, but he lived to preach the Gospel for nearly thirty years.

"*Sunday, October 8th.—Lausanne.* At 9.30 we went to the Temple St. François, a dry, bare, cold-looking church, where we heard a French sermon inanimately delivered, and, as far as I could gather, coldly evangelical. Afterwards we went to the English Church, enjoyed, and worshipped in the liturgy, but had 'thin kail' again for the sermon. Dined with Mr. and Mrs. Budgett at the *table d'hôte* of the 'Faucon,' went to tea to Pasteur Hocart's, had some profitable conversation, and delightful French singing, and family prayer, and then made our way to the Wesleyan Chapel, so-called by rather extravagant courtesy, for it is a room of many shapes, in a small corner house under an archway, and up three flights of stairs. Into this place one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty people were crowded, and the atmosphere was intolerably hot. There is great need for the erection of the Memorial Chapel in Lausanne. After singing and prayer, my friend and I delivered addresses which M. Hocart interpreted. It was the 'upper room' without the gift of tongues, but in this, my first essay at preaching through an interpreter, I was interested and profited, and I trust some blessing will remain.

"*October 11th.—Lago Maggiore.* For the first hour or two I was like one in a trance, not able to realise that I was on an Italian lake. The very name of Italy has been a dream to me from childhood, but my young fancy at its wildest never contemplated an actual sight of it with my bodily eyes. But this is Italy! And I am in the land classic with a thousand memories, the land of art, and music, and song, now also, thank God, of hope, progress, and nascent freedom. . . . There is seated, opposite me on the steamer, a young lady, dressed in exquisite style, who is—how shall I write it?—smoking, not a cigarette, but a veritable cigar, as coolly as any tobacco-loving German of them all.

"*October 12th.—Milan.* Immediately after breakfast we wended our way to the Duomo. Oh for words to speak of that marble wilderness,—wilderness only in its extent and tracklessness. . . . Among the statues (4,500 in number) is one by Canova of the Emperor Napoleon, which has been placed on one of the highest pinnacles, and an Adam and Eve by Michael Angelo, perhaps the grandest old sculptures in the world. Eve, remorseful, is looking into the depths of her great sorrow; the child Cain is at her feet, 'the man from the Lord' whom she fondly imagined she had gotten, stern and self-willed of face and form, as if there slept in him the dark future which her sin should bring into the world. Adam, sad

with the memory of vanished joy, holding in one hand the fruit, sole relic of the lost Eden, leans wearily with the other upon a rude implement of toil ; whilst the little Abel laughs with the glee of childhood, as if he had heard of redemption, and knew that the Heaven which he was to be the first to enter, was not barred from the sinning race for ever. They are very wonderful sermons in stone.

"We drove thence to the Church of St. Ambrose, the oldest and most interesting in Milan. It was originally a temple to Jupiter and Bacchus, and some of the pagan figures remain, blended with the symbols of a purer worship. In this church Ambrose ministered. From this pulpit his words were carried by the Divine Spirit into the heart of the young Augustine. On the sides is carved in stone a representation of an ancient *agapé*. It was evidently a feast in those times, for the table round which they are seated is laden with more substantial viands than our modern 'lovefeasts' know. Beneath the pulpit is the tomb of Stilicho, the general of Theodosius, who won so many victories over the Goths. In the nave is a figure of the brazen serpent given by Otho III. To the lower class of Italians it is generally represented as the identical serpent uplifted in the wilderness.

"*October 14th.—Florence.* We called on the Rev. J. R. Macdougall, the estimable minister of the Scotch Church, to whom we had letters of introduction. He received us with much kindness, and volunteered, *on conditions*, to be our cicerone for the day. We went to the printing-office of the 'Claudian Press,' which is under Mr. Macdougall's management, and where Bibles and other evangelical books are printed by hundreds, and sown broadcast over Italy. We then visited the Waldensian Church and College, and were introduced to Dr. Revel, one of the professors. We were interested in hearing of the work of these labourers in the Lord's vineyard, who are sprung from such an honoured ancestry, and cordially wished them success.

"On our way to the Pitti Palace I stopped suddenly, with much emotion, at the sight of a small square slab, inserted into the wall of a house. It bore this inscription—'Here wrote and died ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING, who, to the heart of a woman, joined the science of a scholar, and the spirit of a poet, and who made with her golden verse a nuptial ring between Italy and England. Grateful Florence places this memorial.'

"All honour to Florence for her gratitude ; and all honour to the great, true woman, so recently passed away, who wailed forth 'the cry of the children,' and burnt into the national soul the fiery lessons of Aurora Leigh.

"The next place we visited was the house, the veritable house of Michael Angelo Buonarrotti, the grand old man, poet, painter, sculptor, architect, politician, and I trust Christian, all in one. It was a rare

enjoyment to tread the very rooms, to see the very sandals, walking-stick, writing-table, etc., which he had used. Many of his original drawings are here, the model for his 'David,' for his greatest work, the 'Last Judgment,' an early sculpture, chiselled when he was scarcely sixteen, a bronze bust of him by John of Bologna, his favourite disciple, and last, to me not least interesting, two autograph letters. . . . Turning into a little bye-street, we came upon a house with this inscription :—'In this house was Alighieri born, the Divine poet.' It was no small thing to have had communion, so to speak, with Michael Angelo and with Dante in the course of one day.

"From the Church of San Miniato there is a fine general view of Florence. You trace the course of the Arno from the distant mountains on the right, through the heart of the city, and winding along the fruitful valley towards Pisa. The city is before you, 'like a pearl set in emeralds.' The hill which rises behind it is Fiesolè, the ancient Florence, of which Milton sings,—

"The moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening from the top of Fesolè ;"

and where Milton and Galileo met,—grander meeting than of monarchs in the 'Field of the cloth of gold.' Far away to the left is Pistoja, with the pillar of Catiline, and the majestic Apennines close up the view.

"*Sunday, October 15th.*—Went in the forenoon to the Scotch Church in the Lung' Arno, witnessed the recognition of two new elders, and preached to a congregation of eighty-three persons. It was to me a joy and a refreshing to be permitted to speak for my Master in Italy. In the afternoon, my friend Mr. Gervase Smith occupied the pulpit, these being the 'conditions' upon which our friend Mr. Macdougall consented to be our guide yesterday."

From Florence they went to Genoa, and thence returned to Milan. From Milan their route was by Como, and Bellaggio to Colico, and over the Splügen Pass to Coire, and it was their intention to return home by Zürich, Schaffhausen, and Basle, Baden, Heidelberg, etc., to Cologne, and thence to Calais.

"*October 24th.*—*Baden Baden.* . . . After the *table d'hôte*, where my *vis-à-vis* was an English M.P., we went to the Conversationshaus, where in the large and splendid hall a brilliant company was gathered, listening to music ; while in the smaller saloons excited players were busy at the

gaming tables. The only persons who appeared unmoved were the *croupiers*. For nearly an hour we stood watching the players, some at *roulette*, and some at *vingt-un*, whatever those games may be. I tried at first to understand them, but gave up the attempt in despair. It was a sad sight; old men with white hair, men in manhood's prime, youths just entering upon life, gouty old dowagers roused to cheat people into the belief that they were young, new-made wives entreating their husbands for money that they might stake it upon the hazard, and worst of all, 'simple maidens in their flower,' young Eves, with loose duennas or gambling mothers like serpents by their side,—all were there, intent upon the play, fevered with the excitement of occasional gain, but of far more frequent loss. I observed some who seemed to win by every venture, others whom ill-luck attended throughout. The English M.P. who sat opposite me at the *table d'hôte* was there, and staked so largely as to excite the attention of the managers, who keenly watched his movements. At one time he staked a whole handful of gold at a venture, which the merciless rakes swept off, and again he extended his hands, like Danaë, to receive a shower of gold. It is to be hoped he rose from that table 'a sadder, but a wiser man,' for he left off a loser of something like a hundred and fifty pounds. I was particularly struck with a young girl with a very innocent face who blushed painfully with the excitement of the game. She lost for a long time, but played on with desperate hardihood until a slight turn of fortune came. She had an elderly woman with her who seemed to prompt her to play, and to counsel her where to place her money. . . . I have rarely seen a sadder sight than those tables presented. I longed for the language to testify against the abomination, or to lay a beseeching hand upon the shoulder of that young girl, and utter a word of warning in her ear.

"October 27th.—*Brussels*. We had hoped to have a quiet Sabbath in Brussels, and on Monday to leave for 'home, sweet home.' Alas for the vanity of all human expectations! Letters have come, and the postscript of one of them brings me tidings that a sore trouble has befallen. The messenger of death has again entered our family, and my loved ones at home need me, for they are in sorrow. Half-past six was the hour at which the intelligence reached me, eight o'clock saw me on the route for home. The night fitful and stormy, with now and then pause of calm, and glimpse of star, fit emblem of my disturbed mind, with its fluctuations of distrust and reliance, of wonder and prayer. Calais is reached, we have a woful passage; by six in the morning are in London, and have aroused my friend's household. At 11.45 I left Paddington for Bristol, arriving safely at home by three o'clock. So comes to an end, abruptly, and by a great sorrow, this Journal of Travel. The sorrow, however, is but a human pang, for upon the future of our beloved one no cloud darkens.

“ ‘She is not, for the Lord hath taken her—
And softly, from the hushed and darkened room,
Two angels issued, where but one went in.’

“During the last five weeks we have been preserved without an accident, and without an illness, through a journey of three thousand miles, during which we have been in Belgium, France, the Duchies of Luxembourg, Darmstadt, and Baden, Prussia, Italy, and nineteen cantons of Switzerland. We have seen nineteen lakes, sixty-five rivers, and fifty-two towns with more than ten thousand inhabitants. We have travelled on one river, seven lakes, and two seas, twice on horseback, in one stage-coach, four carriages, five diligences, on fourteen steamboats, and thirty-one railways. We have crossed both Alps and Apennines, and now, thanks be to God for the sight of some of His most marvellous and beautiful works, both of that beauty which He has enabled His creatures to develop, and of that which He has flung forth from His own royal hand. I would fain hope that my life shall be the better for my journey, and that my ministry, if it please God that I should continue to exercise it, shall be more faithful and efficient because of the revelation of God which has been shown to me in nature,—a revelation with no redemptive strains among its music, but glorious with exceeding glory when illustrated by the Word, and viewed with a faith which sees the Redeemer in all.”

On his return to Clifton Mr. Punshon found himself so far improved in health as to be able to resume his work, or at least some part of it. He preached but once on a Sunday, and greatly lessened the number of his week-day engagements. He was, indeed, obliged to “go softly,” and economise in various ways the strength which for many years he had spent so lavishly. This slackening in his public labours had its compensations both for himself and his people. He was able to meet classes, to conduct prayer-meetings, and to bring his great influence and administrative skill to bear upon the details of Circuit work. A new chapel at Redland was the next step in the development of the Clifton Circuit, and he set himself to devise a scheme for its speedy erection.

One of his first acts after returning from the Continent was to put in writing his impressions of Methodist missions in Italy. His had been in no sense a tour of official inspection or inquiry. But he was deeply interested in the cause of evangelical religion in Europe, and he examined such aspects of it as came before him with much sympathy and with keen intelligence. He was neither an official optimist nor an irresponsible fault-finder; but his public advocacy of missions would have been a poor and hollow thing if he could have passed, incurious and unconcerned, through those portions of the missionary field of which he had so often spoken. Then, as in later years of official responsibility, he sought to look the work of Christian missions fairly in the face, to take account of all the facts of the case, the difficulties to be encountered, the modes of work, the character of the workers, and the failures and successes achieved. He was the last man to press a true-hearted, faithful Christian labourer with impatient and unreasonable demands for visible results; but he was equally indisposed to shut his eyes to what seemed inadequacy of effort, or deficiency in the true spirit and aim of the missionary worker.

From notes taken on the spot he wrote as follows:—

“I was desirous, during my late visit to the Continent, to learn as much as possible of the state and prospects of our evangelical work, especially in Italy. Of the work in Lausanne, where I had the privilege of preaching through an interpreter, I need only say that it was pleasant to observe that Pasteur Hocart was recognised as a *notability* by the inhabitants of the town, and to find that a faithful testimony was lifted up for Christ amid prevailing formalism and superstition; while one could only long for the work to be transferred from the stifling room up three flights of stairs to the ‘Memorial Chapel.’ The site which M. Hocart prefers seems to me to be by far the best—just below the Post Office, two minutes’

walk from the Hôtel Gibbon, and in sight of every passenger upon the fine new bridge.

"It would be presumptuous to express any very decided opinion about the work in Italy, as I took but a flying glance at several of the stations ; but sometimes the impressions of a passer-by are valuable, and a quick eye and a thirst for information will often give a looker-on tolerably correct ideas.

"My impressions of that part of the work which is under Mr. Piggott's immediate superintendence were very favourable. The work in Milan is healthy, and the book-depôt, and the preaching-room, as well as the school, under their present guidance appear to me to be answering good ends, and to be honestly worth the money expended upon them. It is quite evident, however, that Mr. Piggott is over-weighted, and could accomplish far more work for Christ if he had less labour on his hands. I did not go into South Italy, but the accounts from Naples and its neighbourhood (from independent sources) are very satisfactory. There are some difficulties and a slow growth in Parma and Spezia, but I was greatly pleased in the former case with the heart and good feeling of the Evangelist, and the book-depôt is doing good. Signor Gioia seems a man of the right stamp, and the congregations are flourishing. The school, however, has greatly fallen off. In Spezia, Signor Lissolo's health has been very feeble, and when I saw him he was just recovering from a severe attack of fever. He has not yet established a school, but it is talked of, and some gentleman in the neighbourhood has made a liberal offer towards its support.

"The least satisfactory part of the work, as it seems to me, is where one would have hoped for its healthiest development, in the city of Florence. I may here say that I went to Florence biassed rather than otherwise in favour of our operations there. I confess to have been disappointed by almost everything I saw and heard. The impression is made upon me, rightly or wrongly, that the money now expended by the Missionary Committee in Florence is not put to the best advantage.

"On the whole, my decided impression is, that to do any permanent good in Florence we must begin anew, taking the work entirely out of the present hands, and that the best thing would be to confide it to a resident English minister, if work could be found for his Sabbaths. The difficulty about this is that an English cause would interfere greatly with Mr. Macdougall's church, and be regarded as unfriendly, and that an Englishman could hardly expect to master Italian so as to preach in fastidious Tuscany, whose proud sons will not even hear Gavazzi, because he is a Bolognese.

"I have preferred to write my impressions *currente calamo*, for I am no accredited agent or official inspector ; but I love the cause of Christ, and am anxious that it should have free course in Italy."

Towards the end of the year 1865 a series of events occurred in Jamaica by which public feeling in England was deeply stirred. An insurrection of negroes took place at St. Morant's Bay, in which eighteen white persons, including magistrates and clergymen, were killed, and more than thirty wounded. The insurrection was suppressed by Mr. Eyre, the Governor of the island, with skill and vigour, but, it was believed, with unnecessary severity. In addition to the loss of life inflicted in the course of the military operations, no less than three hundred and fifty-four sentences of death were pronounced by court-martial, and executed. When the news reached England, public opinion was strongly divided on the subject of the Governor's conduct. Broadly speaking, it produced two parties,—the one abounding in admiration for the coolness, energy, and skill by which the Governor had suppressed a local, and averted a general, insurrection of the negroes; the other full of indignation at the severities exercised in the process, and especially denouncing the trial and execution of Mr. Gordon, a coloured member of the Assembly. Committees were formed for the prosecution of Governor Eyre, and for his defence, and for some months the Jamaica question agitated the whole country. Distinguished men plunged into the controversy on the one side and on the other with equal energy. Mr. John Stuart Mill, Mr. Peter Taylor, and Mr. Goldwin Smith were prominent in the attack, and Mr. Carlyle and Mr. Ruskin in defence. Mr. Mill writes, "The perpetrators of those deeds were defended and applauded in Eng-

land by the same kind of people who had so long upheld negro slavery ;” Mr. Carlyle speaks of the meetings and the protests, *more suo*, as “the English nation making a dismal fool of itself.” It became very difficult for men to think with calmness or speak with moderation. The controversy was carried on in superlatives, and the only issue that seemed worth debating was whether Governor Eyre was an incarnate fiend or an angel of light. Amid the general excitement there were some who preserved their reasonableness and self-control, and could speak strongly yet temperately, joining in the demand for Government inquiry without prejudging the question in its every detail. Mr. Punshon was one of these. A crowded meeting was held at the Broadmead Rooms, Bristol, in which he urged that searching and impartial inquiry should be made into all the circumstances attending the revolt in Jamaica and its suppression :—

‘ He wished to indicate the course which he thought that inquiry ought to take. It was not the question of putting a man on his trial. That there was something wrong in Jamaica they in England were convinced, and they were anxious to get to the bottom of it. They were anxious, not for the trial of Governor Eyre, nor for the trial of the Baptist Missionaries, but for a thorough investigation of the whole affair. There should be inquiry into the causes of the admitted discontent on the part of the negroes in Jamaica ; inquiry why such risings had not taken place in Barbadoes and Trinidad, where larger efforts had been made for the education and uplifting of the people than were permitted in Jamaica. He would inquire, further, whether it was really, as the *Times* asserted, a rising of colour against colour ; whether it was a riot, a servile insurrection, a political revolution, or actual rebellion. Had the teaching of the missionaries contributed to bring it about ? If they had been indiscreet, reprimand them ; if seditious, silence or punish them. But if they had uplifted the people, restrained lawlessness, and prevented for a long series of years the outbreak which had come at last, then let them be cleared of reproach, and receive their thanks.

‘Then there should be inquiry whether the dearest privilege of the British subject had not been infringed in the case of George William Gordon. Upon his guilt or innocence he would pronounce no opinion. He waited for evidence. Antecedently, his character was as good as that of Governor Eyre. Previous good character was the possession of both. It would be no joy to any right-minded person that such a man as Governor Eyre should be proved to have committed himself. It would be a relief to all if he could be cleared altogether ; or if he had done wrong, that it was error of judgment, not cruelty of heart. It should, further, be inquired how it was that not a single casualty had occurred among those engaged in suppressing a widely-organised revolt ; and, finally, it should be inquired whether, after the rebellion had ceased, extreme measures had been resorted to in the execution of such a large number of persons.

‘His chief motive in the matter was not the crimination or the acquittal of Governor Eyre or of the Baptist missionaries, nor the vindication or otherwise of the negro character. It was the honour of England that moved him most. The moral prestige of a nation was its greatest heritage. There were young states in Europe, there was a country now mourning the death of one of the most sagacious monarchs who ever occupied a throne, a people impregnated with English ideas, and looking up to England as its model ; there was young Italy just shaping itself for freedom ; there were some of the freest minds in France looking with respect and admiration towards the institutions of England. It was vain to conceal from themselves that in Belgium, in Italy, in France, public feeling had received a rude shock from the events which had occurred in Jamaica. There were other countries in Europe which they had been accustomed to rebuke, and those countries were speaking of the sullied name of England. He had read these words in an American newspaper :—“ At the close of a long rebellion, the British press with one accord counselled mercy to those who had been defeated. This is English precept. A small rebellion breaks out in a district of one of her own colonies, and she executes the rebels, and dooms the forfeited lives to death by thousands : this is England’s practice.” He desired to clear his country from such reproaches. He wanted those extreme measures to be explained and justified, or disproved. If they could neither be disproved nor justified, let them be disavowed, and, in some sort, atoned for. Then their country would justify the hopes of the nations that looked up to her as a model, and disappoint the expectations of those who would delight to see her shamed and humbled.’

For months together during this and the two following years there are no entries in Mr.

Punshon's journal. He continued to devote himself to the work of his Circuit, and to the affairs of the Bristol district, of which he was chairman; but in every other respect he contracted the sphere of his labours. From May 1865 to January 1867 he entirely discontinued lecturing. He was sadly broken in health, and subject from time to time to great depression. His letters to his faithful friends Mr. Hirst and Mr. Gervase Smith contain such items as these:—

“Nothing will avail, I fear, but absolute rest for twelve months, even if that will. . . .

“I have at last come to the conclusion only to preach twice a week, once on Sunday, and once on a week-day, until the Conference, when, if I am not better, I must become a lawyer's clerk or something of the kind!

“... I hardly know what to say of myself. I am well and ill by turns. I think of going to Malvern for a fortnight to give a brief trial to the cold water system. After the district meeting we start, all being well, for the Continent. . . .

“Dr. Grindrod writes that rest is essential, and I shall be obliged to take it sooner or later. I must ask him how long a rest. I believe I am slowly improving, but very slowly.”

JOURNAL.

“*February 10th.*—Wretchedly ill last Sunday, and by consequence depressed all the week. This chronic ‘unwellness’ is difficult to understand, and hard to bear. But the Lord knows the way, and He leadeth me. I long to trust Him thoroughly. It is ‘encircling gloom,’ but He knows the end from the beginning. The doctors all speak hopefully, but the hopelessness of my own feeling is great.

“*March 4th.*—Spent the last fortnight in London in search of health and rest. Consulted Dr. Kidd, who advises six months' absolute rest on the Continent, or a voyage to Australia and back. It is hard to contemplate protracted absence from the work which I love, the breaking up of my home, etc.; but it may be the Lord's way of leading me more closely to Himself. I would fain love Him supremely through all.

“*March 31st.*—Perhaps better on the whole since I last wrote, but no feeling of the vigour and buoyancy of robust health. My lot seems to be to suffer; well, if suffering only works its end. Death is around and active. Dear Mrs. Wiseman and young Dr. Melson called away.”

As soon as the business of the District Meeting was completed, Mr. Punshon left home for a month's travel on the Continent. Whether or not he might be compelled to lay his work aside for a still longer period was as yet uncertain. Meanwhile, as he had proved before, nothing gave him such release from physical and nervous ailments as a journey like that he now proposed to take. A party of six was formed, including his daughter Fanny and Miss Vickers, his affectionate and tried friends Mr. and Mrs. May, and the Rev. Josiah Pearson, a genial, lovable companion, with the heart of a child and the understanding of a man. This time the route chosen was by the Riviera to North Italy. They reached Nice on the 22nd of May,

“learning two items of intelligence on our arrival,—that there had been a smart shock of an earthquake on Sunday, and that the mosquitoes had arrived simultaneously with ourselves. On the first head we heard no more than the historical fact ; of the certainty of the latter I had convincing proof of which no casuist could deprive me, for I was severely bitten before morning.”

Leaving Nice, they drove leisurely along the Corniche road to Genoa, finding boundless delight in the scenery, the climate, the vegetation, and the picturesque towns and villages on their route. Mr. Punshon's Journal of Travel is, as before, at once minute and detailed in its references, and enthusiastic in its tone. The first Sunday was spent in Genoa, where he preached to a small congregation in Mr. Piggott's house, and baptised his infant child. *Tuesday, May 29th* was his birthday :—

JOURNAL.

“Woke humbled but grateful, ‘with vows and anthems new.’ Left at 7.50 for Desenzano, the farthest town to which in these troublous times

the train is allowed to carry us Venicewards. After we had passed Treviglio, we came to Bergamo, most picturesquely situated on a steep hill, and thence to Brescia, where are large gun-factories. On the viaduct near Desenzano the Lago di Garda came into view, slumbering under the shadow of the Tyrolese Alps; but the sentiment of stillness rudely broken by its flotilla of Austrian gun-boats. At Desenzano we had to 'fend for ourselves,' and after considerable haggling, hired carriages to take us to Verona. The road lay along the shores of the lake, with its glorious background full in view. We then passed the great battle-fields of Solferino and San Martino, and reached the Austrian frontier, where our luggage was examined. Presently we entered the famous Quadrilateral, passing through the first and second lines of the fortress of Peschiera. Here our passports were examined and viséd. It is a place of wonderful strength. Except by blockade, there seems no chance of its reduction. About five o'clock we dashed through the lines, and up the narrow and interesting streets of Verona. I shall never forget the sensations with which we entered this quaint, old-storied city. It was a sultry afternoon, and over the streets large awnings were spread, fastened in some mysterious way to the tops of the houses, and extending, I suppose, nearly for a mile. As you approach the city, the situation of which is exquisitely lovely, its serrated towers, and long lines of frowning fortifications, 'from whose embrasures frown the deep-mouthed gun,' its motley-clad inhabitants presenting almost every variety of colour that was ever issued from the loom, with the white uniforms of the Austrian soldiers flashing amid the crowds, present the most picturesque scene that can be imagined. There are the fort-crowned hills, green up to the stonework. Here is the Ponte Vecchio, with its battlements and castle, the silver stream flowing underneath, and the fine and rugged Alps watching mutely behind. There, spanning the main street, is the Porta Romana, with its double arch, a monument of hoary age, grey with traditions of the Cæsars. Every shop in the bustling streets has its heraldic badge as well as its owner's name, the 'Golden Lamb,' or 'the Stork,' or 'the Portcullis,' as well as the establishment of Pietro Bampi, or Giuseppe Rocchesa, while the market-place is gay with many costumes and vocal with the ceaseless hum of many tongues. Ah! Verona la degna, boasting of Juliet's tomb and the house of the Montagues, even prosaic Englishmen catch a shred of inspiration when they speak of thee. We saw also the Piazza dei Signori, where the Scaligers lived, and, near the Church of San Maria Antica, their tombs, splendid sepulchral erections, enclosed in graceful chain railing. In the middle of the Piazza stands the statue of Dante; and on the front of the palace are statues of the worthies of the city, amongst whom are the younger Pliny, Vitruvius, our old school friend Cornelius Nepos, and Catullus, of whom the Veronese are as proud as are the Mantuans of Virgil. But chiefest of the memories of this wonderful birthday of mine

is the glorious amphitheatre of Verona. This marvellous structure well repaid our journey from England, and would have done so if, instead of rail and steam, we had toiled on sandalled pilgrim feet. It was begun very early in the Christian era, and finished by the Emperor Trajan. The interior is nearly perfect. There are forty-four tiers of seats, sixty-four secondary exit places, the walls are in some places forty feet thick, and it is capable of holding 50,000 persons. It was indeed thrilling to think of the assemblies which in the former time had gathered where we stood; all around, the eager multitudes, merciless arbiters of the strife; from out these dungeons were Christian martyrs led, while, through yon opening, with eyes of flame, the famished lion rushed to seize his prey."

His enjoyment of Venice was intense. Few places had so wrought on his imagination beforehand, or rewarded more abundantly the pleasant anticipations so long cherished.

JOURNAL.

"May 31st.—I have seen this morning one of the most astonishing and impressive sights I ever witnessed. It was the festival of the *Corpus Domini*, and we secured a balcony in the Piazza San Marco to witness the grand procession. It started about eleven o'clock, and it was after one before the ceremony was over. Each parish in the city sent representatives bearing immense gilt candelabra with lighted candles, each parish having its own rich symbol. After these had passed in almost interminable lines, came Franciscan and Dominican friars in their peculiar garb; then the orphan and foundling children. After these the liveried servants of the principal citizens (strikingly few in number), then the *podesta*, the municipality, and Count Toggenburg, the Austrian Governor, and finally, the Canons of St. Mark, and, under a costly *baldacchino*, said to be worth two million francs, the Patriarch and his suite. When he had reached the end of the square opposite the principal door of the cathedral the procession stopped, the Host was elevated, the vast multitude uncovered, and every knee was bowed amid a silence that might be felt. The Host was most distinctly worshipped; it was a piece of sheer idolatry. When the blessing had been given, the cannon roared, trumpets blared, and the holiday had begun. Apart from its religious significance, the whole thing was very imposing. The square glittering with gold and blazing with light, the awful silence, the simultaneous clash of arms as the soldiers knelt in homage, constituted as impressive a pageant as this world can furnish, a memory that will not easily die.

". . . The people in Venice are intensely Italian, though they can only 'peep and mutter' their longings in the presence of an armed

tyranny. It is said that the guns in the forts round Venice have been pointed inward, and that in Verona they are aimed at the houses of the principal citizens. Such is the foundation upon which Austrian occupation of Venetia rests. May God realise the dream of a united Italy, which shall include not only Venice but Rome ! ”

From Venice they made their way to Milan, Como, and Bellagio, and crossed the Splügen Pass into Switzerland, as he had done some eight months before with Mr. Gervase Smith. Ten days later they were at Chamouny, having come from Martigny by the Tête Noire, not without amusing experience of mulish humours on the way.

JOURNAL.

“Our mules were characters in their way ; one, like a shy damsel, provokingly modest ; another, a useful animal in the main, but subject to fits of perverse melancholy ; another, described by its eloquently indignant rider as ‘perfectly intractable, sir ; utterly impervious to impression. Why, sir, I broke three sticks and seriously damaged an umbrella in the endeavour to bring it to reason ! It has the hide of a rhinoceros, the feet of a hippopotamus, the head of a donkey, and the tail of Apollyon ! ’

“After dinner we went out and beheld perhaps the grandest sight of our lives, the sunset on Mont Blanc and the Glacier des Bossons, in a cloudless sky. The monarch’s head was bare, and he had not on even the thinnest of his many cloud-veils, and his attendant aiguilles stood out like spearmen on duty, sharp and keen against the evening sky. The rose and purple varied with yellow and green shades upon the glittering snow, and in the solemn hush of the great hills, as if they grieved mutely for the dying sun, there was something at once to calm and to elevate the soul.”

The “Journal of Travel ” shows very clearly that, when relieved from the strain of his work, and cheered by pleasant journeying with fit companions, Mr. Punshon’s health and spirits rapidly improved. If there be any foundation for the popular belief that the sevens in a man’s life are critical years, years when, so to speak, leases fall in and need to be renewed ; if at these recurring periods nature

re-adjusts her forces and makes her transitions, there was ground for hope in the way that his whole system answered to restorative measures. It has been shown that for a long time he had lived and worked at the highest possible pitch. He had overdrawn the account with his physical and nervous powers, and there were unmistakable threats that those drafts would not be honoured much longer. It was feared by many—feared by himself in his hours of depression—that he had gone too far for complete recovery, that broken health and shattered nerves were all to which he could look forward. But the genial, cheery month of travel with his friends showed that underneath the ailments and nerve-exhaustion from which he was suffering there was still a vast reserve of vital power. His enjoyment of nature was fresh and keen, rising at times to rapture; his interest in men and things was undiminished; his imagination kindled as readily as ever in the presence of foreign cities and ancient buildings, of venerable monuments or renowned works of art. His quick glance let few things escape it—solemn, pathetic, or grotesque—in the scenes amid which he found himself. His memory swept into its receptacle facts and dates, sayings and doings, old and new, with a swiftness and certainty in which there was little, if any, falling off; while his pen, still “the pen of a ready writer,” found it no task to write in amplest detail the history of each day. These things did not betoken a real and permanent exhaustion. Recovery might be delayed, but it must surely come to a nature which, in spite of a prodigal expenditure, showed still such large

and available resources. Meantime, he himself, even when most depressed, "loved life, and would fain see many days." He sought to school and subdue himself in this matter, to bring his mind to the thought that possibly his work was well-nigh done, and his course finished. It was a time of conflict and discipline. "Take me not away in the midst of my days. . . . O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me. . . . Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

Thus William Morley Punshon prayed in the darkest hours of 1866,—a year when the shadow of death seemed gathering for him. But he was heard in that he feared. As to the king of Judah when "he turned his face toward the wall and prayed unto the Lord," "there were added unto his days fifteen years."

"The Lord hath chastened me sore: but He hath not given me over unto death."

"I shall not die but live, and declare the works of the Lord."

CHAPTER X.

1866—1868.

CLIFTON, LONDON. *Aged 42 to 44.*

Letter to Rev. R. Ridgill.—Publishes *Sabbath Chimes*.—Letters from Friends.—Conference of 1867.—Completion of Watering-Places Chapel Fund.—Appointed President of Canadian Conference.—Inner History.—Continental Travel.—Lecture : *Florence and its Memories*.—Address and Presentation.—Farewell to England.

TOWARDS the close of the year 1866, Mr. Punshon wrote at considerable length to his old friend Ridgill. Nearly five and twenty years had passed since they met, and the correspondence had, as was almost inevitable, dwindled down to an interchange of letters at long intervals; but each retained for the other the affection which had begun in boyhood, and was to last to the close of their common lifetime.

LETTER TO REV. R. RIDGILL.

“September 29th, 1866.

“I can scarcely tell you how often I have made up my mind to write to you, nor how I have been prevented time after time. If you knew my experience during the last twelve months, you would not wonder at my silence, and you would forgive my seeming neglect.

“My illness has changed me in many respects; not essentially, for I am still made up of the old warp and woof, but, being an exhaustion of nervous energy, it touched the springs of hope, and life seemed, without any physical disease upon me, to have lost all its buoyancy and vigour.

I am better, much better, but it will probably be a long time before I am well, if indeed I ever possess again the robustness of former years. I have had to struggle sorely, moreover, with mental disquietude. I could have braced myself for illness, but to be neither ill nor well tried my faith and patience to the uttermost.

“Of English Methodism you know, I suppose, as much as I can tell you. There is a growing indifference to class meetings, which I do not like to see; but it seems an inevitable tendency of a higher civilization where the culture of the leaders does not advance with that of their charge. Some say it is a result of a more refined and reverent religious feeling. This I have yet to learn. Our pulpit is well sustained. Many of our younger men are of great promise. External prosperity abounds, but the numbers remain almost stationary. It is small comfort to know that we share this languor with other Churches. The attritions of mind are fiercer now than they ever were, and all things appear in preparation for such a war of opinion as we have never seen yet.

“. . . I have a chapel on hand just now, to be opened on November 1st. My fund, which is yet £1,200 short of the £10,000 contemplated, keeps me busy, for I must finish it this year.

“How many children have you? Mine are making me feel old. Fanny, my eldest, my only girl, is fifteen years old, just finishing her schooling, and I am happy to say, decided for God, and a member of Society. She is tall and delicate. John William, my eldest boy, is fourteen, a mathematical genius, but a care and anxiety to me lest he go astray. Morley, the next, is a little curly-headed rascal who can't learn from books at all, but of shrewd and observant habits. Percy Henry, the youngest, is a very boy, with a boy's 'dread of books and love of fun.' On the whole they are a comfort to me, and I bless God for them.

“. . . How strange it is to look back on former times, when there was a romance even about one's follies. Do you ever essay poetry now? I am foolish enough to meditate another volume, a sort of Methodist *Christian Year*. Whether it will ever appear, time only can decide. The muse is capricious and wilful, and chooses the times of her visits and inspirations. My hobby is for autographs still, and my small store has swollen into a large collection, very large for an amateur, and containing a few very valuable things.

“John Bedford is to be our next President, I suppose. After him, George Scott, Stockholm Scott as we call him. Some in the former time have spoken of me, but that has gone by, *probably for ever*. I know what I say when I say this. I should greatly deprecate the thought of myself in such a position at present, and though I may have dreamed of it sometimes, the dream has had an awakening, and I am wide awake, and sorrowfully, now. I can say no more on this subject. What I have said here will perhaps be interpreted some day.

"I firmly believe, the longer I live, in the mission of Methodism as the preservative of sound doctrine, a happy repository both of order and of life. Do please take this letter as in some sort an atonement for past transgression. Believe me, my heart is the same, and yearns after my old friend 'Hardric'; and though 'Roderick' has been superseded by 'Wilfred,' and 'Wilfred' by a less euphonious name which I bear before the world, I have a fervent 'God bless you' for the friend of my early days."

An allusion in the above letter that will need explanation appears also in a letter written at the same time to Mr. Gervase Smith:—

LETTER TO REV. G. SMITH.

"September, 1866.

"Think of my year's work, and pity me:—£1,250 yet to raise for my fund; £45 of the sum I promised to Redland Chapel yet unraised; £140 for the Circuit not forthcoming; all the subscriptions to my fund to collect; Redland Chapel to open and clear, yet £2,000 short; my *Christian Year* to finish; all Circuit and District matters to look after; the conference to prepare for; and then, *the unknown beyond*."

During his year, not of rest but of diminished activity, he had been quietly engaged upon a new project. Partly as a solace and a recreation, and partly as service to Christ and His kingdom, in the hope that "verse might find him who a sermon flies," he set himself to the preparation of a series of meditations in verse on the great themes of the gospel, and the chief aspects of Christian life and experience. For many years previously he had discontinued the writing of verse. Although poetry had been his first love, and to become a poet was perhaps his earliest ambition, the vocation of the preacher had proved the stronger, and, save for an occasional poem, gay or grave, written to give pleasure to a friend, he had produced little or nothing since the youthful effusions already noticed. The

feeling for poetry had continued strong with him : it had touched and brightened his style, and given glow and charm to his discourses ; but it had not been concentrated upon poetry as an art, or disciplined to the production of anything that required sustained and serious effort. He now essayed the poet's task under conditions very different from those under which his early efforts had been made ; and it is not easy to say whether the later conditions were more, or less, favourable to success than the earlier. On the one hand, his powers had greatly developed, and his whole nature had been deepened and enriched. He was now in the prime of life, and had passed through an exceptional amount of the discipline that leads to wisdom, to ripeness of judgment and largeness of heart. In these respects his qualifications as a poet were vastly greater than in his young and callow days. But, on the other hand, everything in the life of more than twenty years had gone in the direction of the preacher's calling and cast of mind, while his literary style had been moulded by the requirements and conditions of public-speaking. It remained to be seen whether his well-trained instinct of rhetoric would help or hinder him in the sphere of poetry.

Moreover, a man who has attained conspicuous success in one sphere cannot make a venture in another without a certain risk. Mr. Punshon was now one of the most prominent men of his day, and his reputation as a preacher fixed the standard by which he would be measured when he appeared in another capacity. From the nature of the case, any volume of verse he might now publish

would undergo very different criticism from that which his previous efforts had received. But his ambition was a very modest one, or rather was wholly subordinate to the one great aim of his ministry. He did not greatly care to consider whether the volume he proposed to issue would raise or lower his reputation.

Early in 1867 he published *Sabbath Chimes; or, Meditations in Verse for the Sundays of a Year*. The preface was as follows:—

"To those whose 'heart is as my heart,' I offer this little volume, the offspring of a year's enforced pause amid the activities of a busy ministry. I covet for it, chiefly, three successes: that, if God wills, it may be a messenger of mercy to the wandering; that it may be a comforter to the troubled; and that it may be a memory of the writer to many friends."

It has been seen from his letters, and is apparent from the character of the work itself, that *Sabbath Chimes* was intended to be a kind of *Christian Year*, an imitation of the general method and spirit of Keble's well-known volume. The resemblance lies so frankly on the surface as to be an obvious part of the writer's design, and must be taken into account in forming a judgment upon his work.

The scheme of a poem for each Sunday in the ecclesiastical year, and for the chief Fasts and Festivals, was not, however, the invention of Keble, though he has made it his own, and indissolubly associated it with his name. The method is familiar to all who are acquainted with Anglican devotional literature. The hymns of Bishop Jeremy Taylor appended to his *Golden Grove*, of Dr. Donne and Bishop Ken, George Herbert and Henry Vaughan—

to say nothing of the hymns for the Christian seasons to be found in the Roman Breviary and among Lutheran hymn-writers—all point to the method adopted by Keble, and used by him with such enduring results. There was no trespass therefore upon the author of the *Christian Year* in arranging a series of religious poems on a similar plan; but considering how Keble's volume held the field, it was inevitable that any book of similar scope and structure would come into comparison with it, and in this comparison, it may be said at once, he could not but suffer.

There is little need to enlarge upon the qualities of one of the most notable and influential books of the century. For the number of its editions, and the extent of its circulation, for its direct and remoter influence upon religious life, Keble's *Christian Year* belongs to the class of 'volumes paramount' to which the *Imitatio Christi* and the *Pilgrim's Progress* belong.

As in the case of à Kempis and of Bunyan the master-work has, for most persons, effaced the author's other labours, and remains his one monument, *ære perennius*; so in Keble's case, the other aspects of his life will more and more drop out of memory, and he will go down to posterity as the author of the *Christian Year*. A student of Church history here and there will set himself to trace his connection with the 'Oxford Movement,' but thousands will know him only as the author of their morning and evening hymn, and of the religious meditations by which their souls are soothed and purified. Apart from its doctrinal characteristics,

books like the *Christian Year* are few and far between, the rare product of spiritual and intellectual forces whose law of working cannot be calculated. Generations may pass without a single addition to this class of potent books. It was not given to Mr. Punshon to add to their number. His *Sabbath Chimes* was not unworthy of him; it did not injure the reputation which he had secured by labours of another kind; it gave pleasure, and ministered to the devotion of many; it contains many a strong, and many a soothing stanza; it is free from the morbid, the sickly, the superstitious; its doctrine is scriptural, its spirit reverent towards God, sympathetic towards man; it contributed a strain or two to the permanent enrichment of spiritual song; but, if it be asked, twenty years after its publication, whether the writer derives reputation from his book, or the book from its writer, there can be no doubt as to the answer that must be given. In other words, Mr. Punshon was, first and last, a preacher, and his achievements in other directions, including that of poetry, remain unmistakably subordinate.

With very few exceptions, the pieces included in this volume are religious meditations, not hymns. The observation of the late Principal Shairp upon this characteristic of *The Christian Year*, is equally applicable to *Sabbath Chimes*.

"It cannot be too clearly kept in view that Keble is not a hymn-writer, and that *The Christian Year* is not a collection of hymns. Those who have come to it expecting to find genuine hymns will turn away in disappointment. They will seek in vain for anything of the directness, the fervour, the strong simplicity which has delighted them in Charles Wesley. But to demand this is to mistake the nature and form of

Keble's poems. There is all the difference between them and Charles Wesley's, that there is between meditation on the one hand, and prayer, or thanksgiving, or praise on the other. Indeed, so little did Keble's genius fit him for hymn writing, that in his two poems which are intended to be hymns—those for the morning and the evening—the opening in either case is a description of natural facts, wholly unsuited for hymn purposes. And so when these two poems are adopted into hymn collections, as they often are, a mere selection of certain stanzas from each is all that is found possible."

There is a very close parallel between the character and history of the morning and evening hymns of Keble and Punshon. The morning hymn as it stands in *The Christian Year* consists of sixteen stanzas; as abridged in *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, it has but five. The evening hymn, in *The Christian Year* fourteen stanzas in length, is reduced to six in the same hymn book. Similarly, the hymn for morning, twelve stanzas long in *Sabbath Chimes*, is reduced to five in the *Wesleyan Hymn Book*, and the hymn for evening, from twelve to six. In the poems alike of the Anglican and of the Methodist are "descriptions of natural facts," beautiful in themselves, and steeped in an atmosphere of devout meditation, but foreign to the spirit and method of a true hymn. For the reader these two portions are an essential and indispensable part of the whole, but they are not suited for the service of the sanctuary.

Lovers of Keble, *The Christian Year* in hand, will still repeat at sunset the lines:

"'Tis gone, that bright and orbèd blaze,
Fast fading from our wistful gaze;
Yon mantling cloud has hid from sight
The last faint pulse of quivering light."

But in the congregation this and the succeeding verse are passed over, and the evening hymn begins,

"Sun of my soul ! Thou Saviour dear,
It is not night if Thou be near :
Oh ! may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes."

So, in households where the *Sabbath Chimes* are prized, the quiet worshipper communing at eventide with God and his own heart, will read,

"Another Sabbath sun is down,
Grey twilight creeps o'er thorpe and town,
How much of sorrow, unconfessed,
Lies hidden in yon darkening west !

"What burdens, uncomplaining borne,
What masks o'er latent anguish worn,
What pangs of heart-break, plots of sin,
Have this night's shadows folded in !"

But no Sunday evening passes in town or country, in England and the larger England where our language runs, but the public worship of the day closes with the verses in which meditation is quickened into prayer and praise, and solitary communings are merged in common supplications and thanksgivings :

"Whate'er has risen from heart sincere,
Each upward glance of filial fear,
Each true resolve, each solemn vow,
Jesus our Lord ! accept them now.

"Whate'er beneath Thy searching eyes,
Has wrought to spoil our sacrifice,
'Mid this sweet stillness while we bow,
Jesus our Lord ! forgive us now.

"And teach us erring souls to win,
And hide their multitude of sin ;
To tread in Christ's long-suffering way,
And grow more like Him day by day.

"So as our Sabbaths hasten past,
And rounding years bring nigh the last ;
When sinks the sun behind the hill,
When all the weary wheels stand still ;"

“When by our bed the loved ones weep,
And death-dews o’er the forehead creep,
And vain is help or hope from men ;
Jesus our Lord ! receive us then.”

As a religious poet Punshon had this in common with Keble, that he accepted without reserve or qualification the Christian view of human life. Neither of them was at any time a doubter. No traces of conflict, or of stormy and perilous stages of thought, can be discerned in their verse. The firm foundation of a definite creed is in each case unmistakable. And whatever may be said for “honest doubt” as a source of poetic inspiration, hearty faith is at once more fruitful and more potent.

And as the author of *The Christian Year* and the author of *Sabbath Chimes* held with equal firmness the great doctrines of the common faith, so each accepted heartily the system of the Church he loved. Here Keble had, as a poet, the advantage. The Church of Keble, whatever may be urged against it, was at least

“Meet nurse for a poetic child.”

Its venerable antiquity and historic associations wrought powerfully upon him. Its literary traditions were of a kind to call forth and give encouragement to his genius. Herbert, and Vaughan, and Bishop Ken smiled upon him : Hooker, and Taylor, and Wilson nodded approval. The devotion of centuries had moved through that round of sacred seasons of which he became to a new generation the poet and the interpreter. Those who were familiar with the English Prayer Book were, so to speak, a constitu-

ency prepared for *The Christian Year*, where the spirit of the Prayer Book is precisely caught, and well-nigh perfectly expressed.

In the case of Punshon and his volume there was little or nothing answering to this. There was no tradition for him to take up and enrich. He had no predecessors by whose labour a certain strain of meditative devotion had been made familiar and dear to the people. The one form in which Methodism has possessed high poetic inspiration is that of the hymn, and the one name of commanding reputation belonging to it is that of Charles Wesley. As a hymn-writer Charles Wesley was unrivalled in his own age, and hardly surpassed in any; but as soon as he went outside that special province he sank to the level of his day, the day when English poetry touched its low-water mark.

The literary traditions of Methodism were not therefore a help, a stimulus, an inspiration to Mr. Punshon, as were those of the Anglican Church to Keble. In his attempt to associate the Sundays of the ecclesiastical year with meditations in verse, he had no support in the usage of Methodists at large. Among them there are undoubtedly many to whom the dignity, the tenderness, the poetic charm of liturgies, and of ancient memorials and observances, powerfully appeal; but, speaking generally, these things have been altogether subordinated to the maintenance of evangelical doctrine and Church principles. Without running all the lengths of Puritanism in its disregard of "times and seasons," the devotional life of Methodists has detached itself from the old ecclesiastical order. The few great

festivals are remembered, but the calendar as a whole is civil, not churchly, or where it is the latter, its epochs and successions are modern and denominational.

In shaping his work, then, as a Christian poet on the general model adopted by Keble, and by him invested with fresh authority, Mr. Punshon was to some extent seeking to combine the characteristics of two distinct systems,—to cast the free, experimental religious life of Methodism into the mould of Anglicanism, or at least into the form that Anglican piety had for the most part preferred. Not that his book goes in obvious bonds to the order of the Church's year. The Sundays after Easter, and after Trinity, are not so named in detail, though their numbers are observed; the theme of the poem is not of necessity chosen from the lesson, gospel, or epistle for the day—a rule which at times pressed heavily upon Keble himself—so that the ecclesiastical calendar does not too prominently rule the procession, though it furnishes the fixed points by which the proportions of the whole are governed.

There is, of course, no reason why a writer should not employ the method of any school towards which for any reason he feels himself drawn. The Anglican is at liberty to write another *Pilgrim's Progress*—if he can, and the Nonconformist to produce a second *Christian Year*, on the same condition; and yet, perhaps, neither of these things is likely, not more from the want of genius, than from the lack of inner sympathy and accord. Perhaps, after all, none but a Churchman born and bred can write a devout and pleasing poem for, say—"the Sunday called Septua-

gesima." Or, if that be saying too much, none but a Churchman will have the ear, and reach the heart of persons who greatly observe Septuagesima and Sexagesima.

If Mr. Punshon's volume has not secured the permanent position which his friends expected, the foregoing considerations will furnish at least a part of the explanation. On its appearance it was heartily welcomed. Personal friends recognised characteristic modes of thought and feeling. Those who knew him only as a preacher found him a preacher still, setting forth in verse the gospel to which they had often listened, the aspects of the Christian's life and calling with which he had made them so familiar. If in the pulpit his sermons were poems, as was often said, his poems are not seldom sermons, rising from the preacher's heart though shaped by the poet's hand. Again and again the moral of the sermon is enforced in verse. For example, the courage that is "not ashamed of Christ," a continually recurring theme in his ministry, is described and commended as follows:—

"There is a courage braver far
Than charges in the ranks of war,
Or leaps to hear the cannon's boom,
Or speeds, with patriot pride, to doom.
A hardy frame of well-knit nerves
The soldier's purpose amply serves,
And speeds the thinning phalanx on,
When banners trail, and hope is gone.

"But warriors oft have backward turned
When folly laughed, or passion burned ;
Scared from the right by witling's blame,
Have let small sneers their manhood shame.

So on Gilboa's rainless field,
The monarch 'casts away his shield.'
So Samson, when his lusts invite,
Turns craven in the moral fight.

"Let God inspire!—then weak are strong,
And cowards chant the battle-song;
He, whose approach the darkness hides,
Stands fast when all the world derides;
'Mid fiercest fires the generous youth
Is valiant for the living truth;
And, martyred for the Saviour's sake,
Heroic woman clasps the stake.

"We thank Thee, Lord!—when Thou hast need
The man aye ripens for the deed;
And Thou canst make the timid bold
To shed his fears—as dross from gold—
And, nerved from Heaven, nor droop nor quail,
Though worlds confront, and hell assail.
Oh breathe, in this and every hour,
On each—on me—this soul of power!"

This may be said to be the expansion of a passage in his *Daniel*, which, again, has its parallels in many a sermon, so constantly did he return to the central themes, doctrinal and ethical, of his ministry.

There is another passage in the same lecture, beginning, "There are no trifles in the moral universe of God," that may be compared with the following lines:—

"There are no trifles. Arks as frail
As bore God's prince of old,
On many a buoyant Nile stream sail
The age's heirs to hold.
From Jacob's love on Joseph shed,
Came Egypt's wealth and Israel's bread;
From Ruth's chance gleaning in the corn,
The Psalmist sang;—the Christ was born.

"Each spirit weaves the robe it wears
 From out life's busy loom,
 And common tasks and daily cares
 Make up the threads of doom.
 Wouldst thou the veiled future read?
 The harvest answereth to the seed.
 Shall heaven e'er crown the victor's brow?—
 Ask tidings of the battle now."

The sympathy of Christ, a theme very dear to Mr. Punshon, and one on which he frequently enlarged with deep and tender feeling, is the subject of Poem XV., "For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted":—

"Our hearts, forlorn and troubled, need
 A tender priest and true,
 Mighty with God to intercede,
 But kind and human too;
 And Christ, in this His desert-hour reveals
 The arm of conquering strength, the heart which warmly feels.

"Vainly *he* tells of wound or scar
 Who ne'er took sword in hand,
 Idly *he* speaks of ocean's war
 Who sees it from the strand.
 The 'visage marred' begets the sense of pain,
 Our own tears give the power all other tears to explain.

"So, Jesus, in this school of scorn,
 Though Thou wert Son Divine,
 The whispered sin, the troubling thorn,
 The thought of shame were Thine.
 'Tempted in all points.' Be Thy name adored
 For this true humanness,—our Brother, Saviour, Lord!"

The foregoing quotations will suffice to indicate the character of Mr. Punshon's verse. A more detailed criticism would call attention to merits both of thought and of expression that are here

passed over. It would also be compelled to notice certain defects—obscure or ambiguous phrases, words of doubtful legitimacy, and the excessive use of compound terms. But enough has been said. The final impression left by a re-perusal of *Sabbath Chimes* is that of strongly-held religious belief, of earnest convictions and warm sympathies working in a mind touched and quickened by poetic sensibility, and of one accustomed to use language for the purposes of Christian oratory, employing it with varying success under new and more exacting conditions. Looking at Mr. Punshon's life-work as a whole, it may be said of him, as John Wesley wrote of his brother Charles, "His *least* praise was his talent for poetry."

One of the writer's hopes in connection with the publication of *Sabbath Chimes* was immediately and abundantly realised. Through the wide circle of his personal friends it was received with liveliest pleasure, and called forth many a warm acknowledgment. Few men have leaned more upon their friends than he, not for help but for happiness, finding in their affection solace and delight second only to those which spring from faith in God. His volume of verse, to whomsoever else it might find its way, was an offering to his friends, an offering straight from his heart, and one that undoubtedly went straight to theirs. Letters of thanks poured in from every side, and the pleasure that these gave him surpassed, as at all times of his life, that which he received from favourable notices in the press. It was characteristic, not of an author's vanity, but of his passion for friendship, that these

letters were carefully preserved. A few extracts from them will be read with interest:—

FROM THE REV. THOMAS JACKSON.

"I thank you for the copy of your *Chimes* which you have had the kindness to send me, and which I have read. Some of the metres perplex me. They are, I believe, in accordance with modern practice; but my old ears have been mostly attuned by the men of former generations, such as Dryden, Pope, Prior, and Cowper. With the modern artists I am not much acquainted, my prosaic mind being mostly familiar with the compositions of dry theologues, who either had no imaginations, or never used them. Yet I like your sentiments; and several of your *Chimes*, especially towards the close of the volume, really did my heart good. They brought tears into my eyes, especially those which relate to the death of Christ as a sacrifice for sin.

"May I suggest that you should take care of your health? I believe the Master has a great work for you yet to do."

It should be mentioned that Mr. Jackson was then in his eighty-third year.

FROM THE REV. G. T. PERKS.

"I greatly admire the sound discrimination with which you have shunned *High Churchism* on the one hand, and *no Churchism* on the other. No Christian, unless stereotyped in a stiff and narrow sectarianism, can read your *Chimes* without being quickened in intellect, and strengthened in soul."

FROM MRS. OXENBOULD, BIRMINGHAM.

"By the bedside of my suffering sister I have read and re-read the poems, only to return to them with fresh interest, and thus, in my case at least, one of your aims, that of 'comforting the troubled,' has been achieved. I have scarcely as yet thought out their comparative merits, but find myself most frequently recurring to 'Faith,' 'Hope,' 'Love,' 'Trinity,' 'The Lord's Supper,' the sixth, fifteenth, and thirty-third; while single verses such as

'And as sometimes when words would fail,'

and

'E'en as for rain the cedars pant,'

or, again,

'More grateful in the desert lone,'

fix themselves on the memory, to become a daily source of refreshment."

FROM THE REV. NEVISON LORAINÉ.

"Your most welcome volume has just reached me, and I hasten to acknowledge before even I have had time to read it ; but already, let me assure you, that one of the 'three successes' which you covet for your volume, it has achieved. It has come laden with a fresh and fragrant 'memory of the writer' to an old, a widely separated, but an unestranged friend. And many a time and oft hereafter your *Sabbath Chimes* will float on a

'Wind of memory murmuring the past.'

As the year 1867 advanced Mr. Punshon's health steadily improved. The comparative rest had restored his nervous system. He was still a strong man, and if his strength were but moderately husbanded there was little reason to fear its early exhaustion. He began to resume public work, though not upon the former scale. After an interval of nearly two years he was induced to deliver a lecture in a village in the Midlands, and finding himself no worse for the effort, lectured during the spring and early summer at Plymouth, Wellington, Kidderminster, Burslem, Cardiff, Dublin, and Belfast.

At the missionary meeting held in Exeter Hall on the 29th of April, he received what might fairly be called the welcome of the entire Connexion upon his reappearance in a sphere peculiarly his own. To quote the language of *The Watchman*, "The platform seemed itself again as William Morley Punshon rose to speak."

In June he went to Ireland, and attended the Conference which met in Belfast under the presidency of the Rev. William Arthur. On the 25th of July the British Conference began in Bristol, and Mr. Punshon's term of service in the Clifton Circuit was practically at an end.

For two reasons the Conference of 1867 is memorable in his history. It saw the self-imposed task whose labours and anxieties he had borne for five years brought to a successful close ; and it marked the termination of the first and longest of the three stages into which his ministry was to be divided. Before another Conference came round he had crossed the Atlantic, and found a home and sphere of work in Canada. There he was to spend five years of mingled happiness and sorrow, in labours that stretched, literally, from ocean to ocean, from Nova Scotia to Vancouver Island. The five years spent in Canada were to be succeeded by a second ministry in England, the last of the well-marked periods of his life-work, eight years of honours and ripe renown, of multiplying cares and decreasing strength, of bodily suffering and spiritual discipline, until, broken and spent by manifold labours pressed into years too few, he should finish his course. But all these things were yet hidden with God. Neither light nor shadow from the future fell upon his path. The morrow must take thought for the things of itself.

It has been seen that the undertaking to raise £10,000 in five years for the " Watering-Places Chapel Fund " had been, from various causes, a heavier one than he anticipated. That for nearly two years he had been obliged to desist from lecturing, was in itself a hindrance to his operations of the most serious kind. There were times when the sense of responsibility weighed heavily upon him, and it seemed as though he must seek relief in some modification of his original plan. No one was disposed

to hold him severely to his offer, and had he stated his inability to carry it out, the utmost consideration would have been shown him. But what public opinion would have willingly sanctioned, he himself could not permit. Nothing less than his first proposal in its full dimensions would satisfy him, and, in spite of all difficulties, he was able to announce to the Conference the completion of the scheme. The sum raised by lectures, sermons, and donations secured by personal application, was £10,117. In addition to this, interest had accrued to the amount of £580, making a total of £10,697. What it cost him to secure this great result has been partly seen. What he accomplished thereby for the strengthening and development of Methodism will in some measure be understood from the following facts:—The sum of £8,870 was granted towards the erection of twenty-four new chapels, at an estimated cost, in many cases exceeded, of £54,665, to provide sittings for 10,920 persons. Towards the alteration and enlargement of six chapels, at a cost of £3,700, a sum of £845 was granted; and a further sum of £555 was given to assist in the liquidation of debt upon five other chapels to the total amount of £4,361.

By this fund, therefore, the erection of twenty-four new chapels in watering-places was secured, and eleven others were benefited by alterations, enlargements, and the removal of debt. Nearly eleven thousand sittings were added to the chapel accommodation of Methodism; while the £10,000 raised by Mr. Punshon were the means of calling forth from local efforts no less a sum than £62,727. What these figures imply will be best understood by those who are

accustomed to deal with church-extension schemes. It remains only to give a list of the places where new chapels were erected, in order to show how widely the benefits of this fund were distributed. These are, Eastbourne, Folkestone, Walmer and Deal, Brighton, Lancing, Bournemouth, and Weymouth; Ilfracombe, Helstone, Niton, Sandown, and Binstead; Matlock Bath and Malvern; Keswick, Saltburn, Bridlington Quay, and Lytham; Rhyl, Llandudno, and Aberystwith; Gorleston near Yarmouth, and Bray in Ireland. Enlargements were made at Torquay, Tenby, Bognor, Builth, Ramsgate, and Weston-super-Mare; and debts paid off at Dawlish, Bowness, Ambleside, Ventnor, Freshwater, Filey, and Blackpool.

The Committee of the fund, in the report which was presented to the Conference, speaks as follows:—

“It is with no ordinary feeling of respectful admiration and gratitude that the Committee bears testimony to the cheerful, sustained, and continuous efforts of Mr. Punshon to secure the end contemplated. Originally projected by him, the ‘Watering-Places Chapel Fund’ has been raised solely by his exertions; the Committee has acted merely as the executive in dispensing the means placed in its hands. Amid ‘labours more abundant,’ and recently in a state of health which might well have demanded an entire relaxation from such toil, our beloved brother has executed his self-imposed task. Within the period proposed, the magnificent sum of £10,000 has been placed upon the altar, for the special purpose of rearing suitable houses of prayer in the beautiful watering-places of our land. The success which has crowned this work will appear more signal when it is remembered that the last four years have been marked, on the one hand, by national financial difficulties of an extraordinary character; and, on the other hand, by special and enlarged contributions towards commercial and other objects on the part of the Methodist public. The cotton famine and the commercial panic have been contemporaneous with the establishment of the ‘Wesleyan Missionary Jubilee Fund,’ and the ‘Metropolitan Chapel Fund.’ These Church schemes have been most munificently supported by our people; yet, during this peculiar trial and unusual effort, and with so much to depress

the energies and divide the attention of all, the 'Watering-Places Chapel Fund' has been raised and conducted to the issue which we now report. By this nobly sustained and successful effort Mr. Punshon has laid the Connexion under lasting obligations; to him the Committee tenders its warmest thanks, and earnestly prays that he may long be spared to occupy that position of honour and usefulness which he has so well earned by his eminent abilities and unwearied devotion to the cause of Christ."

Upon the presentation of this report, it was moved by Mr. Arthur, and seconded by Mr. Scott, that the thanks of the Conference should be given to Mr. Punshon. This was carried with enthusiasm, and he was left grateful and happy at the successful issue of long and anxious toil.

By one other quality which should be referred to, the value of Mr. Punshon's labours was greatly enhanced. He followed with close and kindly interest the cases dealt with by his fund. His personal attention was given to local details, to the great advantage of those concerned. This was particularly the case with regard to North Wales, where his friend the Rev. Frederick Payne was devising large things in respect to the rapidly increasing watering-places on that coast. Year after year, often accompanied by Mr. Gervase Smith, he visited the neighbourhood, and threw himself with characteristic energy into Mr. Payne's ever-expanding operations. At Rhyl and Llandudno, at Conway, Prestatyn, and Llanrwst he rendered service on many occasions and in various ways.

The Conference of 1867, however, was marked by a far more important event in Mr. Punshon's history than the completion of the scheme that has been described. For reasons which, to his own mind, had become conclusive, he determined, should the

consent of the Conference be given, to accept an invitation that had reached him from Canada. The Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada, in its address to the British Conference, after describing its fields of labour, and plans of operation, made the following request:—

“We believe that we should be much assisted in these great purposes by the example, sympathies, and labours of one of the most approved members of your own body; and we therefore venture to suggest and solicit your appointment of the Rev. William Morley Punshon as our next President, with the request that he may be permitted to travel through our Connexion the current year; believing as we do, that his counsels and ministrations will, under the Divine blessing, greatly edify us and our people, immensely benefit our entire Church and country, and contribute largely to consolidate into one mighty community, Methodism throughout British North America.”

It was felt that compliance with this request involved some important considerations. A strong Committee was appointed, consisting of all the ex-Presidents and eight other influential ministers, to consider the matter in all its bearings, and report to the Conference. It was now generally known that Mr. Punshon was contemplating a step that would profoundly affect his personal and domestic life. It was not unlikely that it might lead to his making his permanent home in Canada, and there were differences of opinion as to the extent to which the Conference would be incurring responsibility, and giving its sanction beforehand to what some, at least, of its members could not approve.

The question which was complicating the otherwise simple matter of Mr. Punshon's temporary transfer to Canada will be best stated in his own words. But meanwhile, the Committee, after looking at the whole matter, recommended the Conference to

accede to the request from Canada, and make the desired appointment. The report of the Committee was laid before the Conference by Dr. Osborn in a speech of great weight.

“He reminded the Conference that for several years past he had advocated, in the strongest manner of which he was capable, the advisableness of maintaining, by frequent deputations, their friendly relations with affiliated Conferences. Just in proportion as their official control over them was diminished, it was of the utmost importance that their moral influence should be extended and increased; and that could be most effectually done by asking brethren to visit them from year to year, to inquire after their welfare, to see how they did, and to give them such encouragement and information as only deputations of living men could do, and letters, however well they might be written, could not supply.

“While their extension in Great Britain was limited in its area, the area in the colonies might be almost said to be unlimited; and many hindrances to their work which existed within the four seas, did not exist in the vast colonial empire of Great Britain. They had in the North American colonies, in their present circumstances, a wide and most important field for the extension of their influence. The recent political arrangements by which the two provinces of Canada and Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward’s Island were consolidated under the title of ‘The Dominion of Canada,’ opened a new door for usefulness in that direction. Not only would the power of Great Britain be consolidated, and a more effective system of government be introduced, but the moral influence of Great Britain would, they hoped, by those means be greatly extended, and opportunities furnished for the spread and progress of Methodism, a matter of far more importance than many persons in this country conceived. They had already in the new Dominion a position of considerable importance, and, if it pleased God to bless their work there, that position would grow every year. He knew no better way of helping than by endeavouring to strengthen Methodism, to give it additional impetus, and, if he might say it, additional prestige, by the appointment of deputations to visit those provinces, and to help the Methodist work in that country. Those were the public and general grounds on which he was prepared individually to recommend to the Conference, and on which, he was thankful to say the Committee was prepared to recommend to the Conference, that the appointment which the Canada Conference requested, should be made by the present Conference. He therefore proposed:—

“‘That it is highly desirable on public grounds that the request of

the Canada Conference should be complied with, and that the Conference be recommended to appoint Mr. Punshon to preside at the next Canadian Conference to be held at Kingston, in the month of June, 1868, and to visit various places in that Connexion in the ensuing year.'"

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Arthur and carried by an almost unanimous vote. Mr. Punshon was further appointed Representative of the British Conference to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, to be held at Chicago in the following May.

The other element in the case was private and personal; yet, as affecting a public man, it was impossible wholly to withdraw it from comment and discussion. Two entries in his journal, the one written some eight months before the Conference, and the other nearly a year and a half afterwards, will best explain his course, and the feelings by which he was actuated.

JOURNAL.

"*November 24th, 1866.*—Strange and grave perplexities have risen up around me, and I am longing to know my duty, and then to be strengthened at all hazards to do it. As far as I can see, my lot will not be cast much longer in this land, and I shall be called upon before long to make the sacrifice of position and influence at the bidding of duty and honour. Be it so. If the sword pierce the heart, Thou, O Lord canst heal the wound, otherwise mortal."

The other entry is one whose significance will be recognised at once. It was written certainly for no immediate purpose beyond that which determines the keeping of a private journal at all; but it is more than probable that the thought was present to his mind that at some future time it would be read, perhaps that it ought to be read, by other eyes than his own. That time has now come. Not with ruth-

less, but with kindly hand death unlocks the drawers of cabinets, and spreads before our eyes long hidden papers to which our friends have entrusted the inmost secrets of their hearts.

JOURNAL.

"*December 2nd, 1868. Toronto, Canada.*—I overcome my reluctance to set down my thoughts and feelings, a reluctance which has mastered me for many months, as this hiatus in my diary shows. The 'strange and grave perplexities' of which I spoke in a former entry deepened and complicated. My searchings of heart grew intenser, until, clear and full my duty rose before me, and I have been strengthened to do it. At the Conference of 1867 I was designated representative to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, and President of the Canadian and Eastern British American Conferences. I had previously announced to the President, and to a large and influential Committee (composed of all the ex-Presidents, the Revs. J. Bedford, President, E. Hoole, W. B. Boyce, L. H. Wiseman, Rigg, Vasey, S. R. Hall, G. Smith, C. Haydon, M'Owan, and J. H. James), that after much and prayerful consideration of the subject, I deemed it my duty to marry Fanny Vickers, who has for nine years been the mother to my children, the only mother, indeed, whom two have ever known. I detailed fully my motives and reasons to Mr. Arthur, in a letter which he comforted me by saying was 'worthy of me, and of the grace of God in me.' In the fulfilment of this duty I had to make great sacrifices, to consent to be misjudged, to grieve some whom I loved, to lay my account with a publicity given to my private affairs which is to me the heaviest cross of the kind that I could be called to bear, to lose a position which had become assured by years of service, to trample upon love of country (with me a passion), to break up old friendships, to bear the imputation of motives which my soul scorns, and to bear it without answer, to found a home in a new world, and above all, to imperil my usefulness. Yet my convictions of duty have never wavered. I was married to dear Fanny on the 15th August by the Rev. Egerton Ryerson, D.D., Dr. Anson Green and Dr. Lachlin Taylor being my sureties. I am happy in my wife's love, and in my own strong assurance that I have done right. The Lord my God, Whose guidance I have invoked, has not suffered me to be haunted by the shadow of a misgiving on this point. I cannot see the future. I am living from day to day. If I can wait, calmly wait, my righteousness shall be brought out as the light, and my judgment as the noonday. My convictions that the law forbidding marriage with the sister of a deceased wife is iniquitous and oppressive, have been of many years standing. I examined into and settled

the matter with myself before I had thought that I should ever be personally involved in its application. Hence, when the duty rose up before me, and it seemed that a way was open to discharge it without entailing embarrassment on the British Conference, I was strengthened to *do* my duty. I claim no credit for it. I am not ambitious to be either a hero or a martyr, but it has been cause of gratitude to me, who know my own heart, and its foolish hankering after everybody's good opinion, that I was not faithless nor craven in this hour of bitter trial, leading, however, in God's providence, to domestic happiness and the rest and comfort of home."

Such were the terms in which he subsequently referred to the proceedings of the Conference and their relation to his personal history. The only record in his diary at the time is as follows:—

"*August 1st, 1867.*—My destiny decided. Designated President of Canada Conference, and Representative to America."

A few weeks later he closed his ministry at Clifton. He preached in the morning at Redland, and in the evening at Victoria Chapel, to overwhelming congregations. All Bristol was represented; it seemed as though all Bristol would have been present had there been room.

As it was not his intention to go to Canada till the following April, he had now, and it might be for the last time, several months at his own disposal. A part of the time he devoted to rest in Wales and travel on the Continent, and the remainder to a series of farewell visits to friends, and to preaching and lecturing in various parts of the country. It was necessary, however, to provide a temporary home, and this he found in Milner Square, Islington.

He was by this time an accomplished continental traveller. His knowledge of routes by rail, steam-boat, and diligence, of hotels, currency, passports, and the like, was both extensive and minute. He

was equally good as a guide over a mountain pass and in a picture gallery. He was experienced, but not *blasé*, enjoying still more deeply on acquaintance what had delighted him at first. The journal of travel which commemorates this latest tour is as ample and as enthusiastic as the earlier ones. It is a hundred quarto pages in length, written in his usual swift, legible hand, and illustrated with no less than eighty-three photographs. Keen enjoyment of life, strong interest in men and things, and unfailing delight in the beauties of nature and art, are evident in every page. Room must be found for an extract or two.

“*September 25th, 1867.*—How wonderfully, even in trifles, history repeats itself. The ‘autocrat of the breakfast table’ notices the consciousness which sometimes flashes across a man that he has been aforetime in precisely the same circumstances as those which were around him at the moment. It was exactly on this day two years ago that I started, then also from 47, City Road, London, for the Continent, in company with the same loved friend. Then, as now, the Chief Commissioners of Highways, or Sewers, or Gas, or Paving, were at work on subterranean improvements, ‘mending their ways,’ on the 25th September, 1865; and on the 25th September, 1867, I found and left them at the same labour.

“*September 26th.*—We made our way to the Exposition. It disappointed me agreeably. The art treasures are comparatively poor; the best have been familiar to us for years; but the glass, porcelain, and *repoussé* work were exquisite. We visited the Bible stand, the missionary museum, and the stand for the distribution of Hebrew Scriptures to the Jews. Nearly two million portions of the Divine Word have been dispersed in seventeen languages to people who have been for the most part eager to receive them. . . . As the gong sounded for departure, the scene was indescribably animating. The crowds poured forth, with every variety of countenance, costume, and conversation, as if Babel had been let loose suddenly. My heart wished that the Babel might speedily find a Pentecost to reverse its doom.”

After a few days in Switzerland, they crossed the Simplon, and made their way leisurely and happily to Venice, and thence to Innsbruck, Munich, Vienna,

and Prague. On the return journey they visited Wittenberg.

"We first made our way to the market-place, where are the newly-erected statues of Luther and Melanchthon. Luther stands with an open Bible in his hand. On the pedestal are four inscriptions : one stating that the ground for the monument was given by the Count of Mansfeld, and that the monument itself was erected by Frederick William III. ; a second with the inscription, 'Believe in the Gospel ;' a third, 'If it be God's work ye cannot overthrow it ;' and a fourth, 'Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.' The statue of Melanchthon is likewise inscribed on the four sides of the pedestal. On the first, 'I will speak of Thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed ;' on the second, 'Endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace ;' on the third, an extract from his writings, 'When we have brought our souls to the fountain of Christ, we have begun to be wise ;' and on the fourth the announcement that the foundation stone was laid by the present King of Prussia so lately as the year 1860.

"It was market-day, and we had an opportunity I should have been sorry to miss, of seeing Saxon peasantry at home. We have seen strange costumes and customs since we left England, but we have seen nothing like the spectacle in this Wittenberg market-place. It was full of stalls, mostly kept by women who had come in long narrow carts, a dozen together. Here might be seen an old dame, sturdy and stalwart they are for the most part, with a sort of woollen stocking for a head-dress, and with clogs which baffle all description. Yonder you may see an equally well-set man in a coat of pig-skin, coarsely, but plentifully ornamented with a rough sort of frieze or fur. All kinds of drapery were exposed for sale, and the strife of the rival dealers to get rid of their wares was most animating. As we walked down the long street we came upon a very popular exhibition, round which a large crowd was gathered. There was stretched out, about fifteen feet in length, a series of barbarous pictures. They represented scenes of love, jealousy, and murder. In every tableau the end was blood, and it was plentifully spread over the canvass. On a small tray in front of the proprietor was his stock-in-trade, the affecting histories which the pictures but faintly illustrated. He drove a thriving trade, turning a dismal barrel-organ while turning a penny, while his Frau accompanied him in a voice like the croak of a raven. I observed in the market-place a singular meeting between man and maid. The man had evidently a tenderness for the damsel. They conversed with much animation for several moments, and then the climax came. He stretched forth his brawny arm, and unostentatiously, but effectually—*wiped her nose ! !*

"At the end of the long street stands the Schloss Kirche, on the gates of

which were affixed the ninety-five *theses* of Luther, protesting against the sale of indulgences. The old gates have been removed, but in their place are fine bronze doors, put there by the King of Prussia, on which the *theses* are engraven. I touched the door with my hand, and in my spirit evoked another Luther to stir into fresh life the effete and shrivelled thing which men call Protestantism now. We entered the church, and then, near the high altar, stood reverently on the dust of Luther and Melanchthon.

"The next spot of interest was Melanchthon's house, with an inscription on the front, 'Here lived, taught, and died Philip Melanchthon.' We passed on from this until we reached the first building through the fortification, the old University, at the rear of which is Luther's house. You enter through the portal. The house stands in the corner on the left. On one of the corbels of the door is his effigy; on the other, his seal, a heart with a cross. Here is the very place where that large heart unbent in kindest humanness from day to day, and where that great spirit went out in prayer, and was stirred to heroism. This second room was Luther's home . . . the rich panelled ceiling, the quaint windows, the elaborate stove, the strong oaken door, the table, the chairs where he and his Catherine sat *vis-à-vis*, his beer-glass—for he was no total-abstainer—his candlestick, the sampler which his wife's hands wrought, the psalter from which that rich voice sang its daily praises unto God. This is Luther's home. It is a hallowed spot, awing the soul as if some strong presence bore it down. There is also a curious bas-relief of Luther, with the inscription

" 'Papa, pestis eram vivus,
Moriens, ero mors tua.'

"The word 'Papa' with strange significance, is printed upside down."

This holiday lasted a month, and the Journal concludes thus:—

"October 25th.—At 6.30 a.m. we arrived at Charing Cross, and an hour later at City Road, having accomplished a journey of 3,064 miles, without let or hindrance. I write these words with a thankful heart, and pray that I may be wiser and better for this experience of travel."

The next few months were all too short for leave-taking in all parts of the country. It seemed as though every place where he had ever preached or lectured claimed a farewell visit before his departure.

But amid all his public engagements, his heart dwelt much at home with his children.

LETTER TO HIS DAUGHTER.

"December 3rd, 1867.

"I wish I could fully put into words all the breathings of my heart for my darling daughter this morning. As I get older, birthdays seem to me more solemn things than they used to do. They are not now occasions for mere festivity, though we should rejoice in the gift of life and its blessings, but times of sober thoughtfulness and prayer. It makes me feel very serious to think that you are "sweet seventeen" to-day.

"I rejoice, my darling child, to know that your young heart has been given to Christ, and that you have learned to carry to Him your sins, and cares, and fears. To-day you should make the covenant afresh; we need constantly to renew our vows unto the Lord. My prayer for you, and surely God our Father will hearken to a father's prayer, is that you may enter from this birthday upon a more earnest religious life, and be blessed with yet richer blessings from the God of your salvation.

"Be determined, my darling, to *master* everything. If you meet with anything in your reading which you do not understand, do not slur it over, or pass it by, but make it your own. Do not get into the fatal habit of thinking that your education is finished. Properly speaking, it should only be beginning, and your school training should be but a preparation for the higher and permanent training of yourself at home.

"I should advise you to do everything by system, and to do things which you do not like as well as those you do like, so that you may be thoroughly furnished, and fit for any station in life which God's providence may allot you in the years to come.

"You little know how much I love you, nor how often I bear you on my mind both by day and by night.

"May God bless my child, and grant that each year as it rolls away may fit her more completely for a bright life here, and for the Father's house at last."

Mr. Punshon's continental travels furnished him with the theme and the inspiration for another lecture. Of all the places he had visited, none fastened upon his imagination with more deep and enduring hold than the city of Florence. It combined for him almost everything in which he took delight, wealth of art treasures, venerable and beautiful build-

ings, historic associations of the most stirring kind, and memories of noblest men.

He determined to pay his tribute to its intellectual and moral glories, and on the 2nd April, 1868, the last week of his stay in England, he took leave of Exeter Hall, the scene of his greatest efforts and successes for so many years, in a lecture on *Florence and its Memories*. The theme itself, its vivid and picturesque treatment, the delivery, ranging through the entire scale of the descriptive and the declamatory, the impassioned and the pathetic, the vast audience, responsive as ever to each master-touch,—all were worthy of the occasion, the leave-taking of the foremost platform orator of the day, of one whose popularity rested alike upon the admiration and the affection of the people. Two hours before the appointed time the approaches to the doors were crowded. Mr. Wm. M'Arthur, then Sheriff of London, his true and valued friend, presided. Three years had elapsed, years of broken health and much depression, since the production of his last lecture, that on Wilberforce ; but it was evident at once that there was no falling away, no sign of exhaustion in thought or feeling, in style or delivery.

The history of Florence gave ample scope for his power of portrait painting. Cosmo and Lorenzo De Medici, Dante, Michael Angelo, and Savonarola, seemed to breathe and walk as he portrayed them. Two notes of feeling vibrated through the whole oration : hopeful sympathy with Young Italy, sharpened now and again into friendly chiding ; and suspicion and dislike of papal Rome, and to each

of these the response from his hearers was immediate and enthusiastic.

At the close of the lecture the audience sprang to their feet, and with waving of hats and handkerchiefs, and applause again and again renewed, testified their delight, and conveyed their good wishes for his future.

He had fulfilled his last public engagement before sailing for America. One thing remained for his friends to do, and that was to give him some solid proof of their affection and esteem, and of the value they set upon the services he had rendered to Methodism, and the cause of religion generally. The rumour that a testimonial was in preparation had considerably disquieted him, and, indeed, called forth a letter from him in which, in a delicate manner, he said that he neither desired nor deserved anything of the kind. But, for once, his wishes were disregarded by his nearest friends, and a small Committee was formed, under the chairmanship of Mr. M'Arthur, with Mr. Alexander M'Arthur and Mr. Radmall as treasurers, to carry out the design on which many hearts were set. On Monday, April the 6th, he was entertained at breakfast by a large number of his friends. A valedictory address was afterwards read by Mr. Arthur.

The reading of the address was followed by the presentation to Mr. Punshon of a salver, suitably inscribed, and a cheque for seven hundred guineas.

In the course of his reply he said :—

" When I first heard of this projected movement, my sensitiveness, or pride, or delicacy, whatever it be called, rose up in arms against it, and I feel as though the first thing I had to do to-day was to vindicate my own consistency. My feeling is unchanged. Although I would not willingly have dispensed with this meeting, so far as personal feeling is concerned, I

would have dispensed with the testimonial of which you invite my acceptance. I feel, as I said in a letter which I ventured to publish, that I do not deserve it, and that I do not desire it. But there is a point beyond which resistance becomes ungrateful, and it would certainly not have been in my nature to trample upon the kindness of my friends, for there never was a period in my life when I was more thoroughly avaricious of good will.

“Some three and twenty years ago I first made the acquaintance of my esteemed friend Mr. Arthur. Before I entered the ministry myself, I was accustomed to look up to him as one in whose footsteps I should like to tread. He was then stirring the public mind of England by his first addresses upon India, just after his return from the missionary field, and some portion of that holy fire which burnt sweetly and brightly, and with no eccentric flame, seemed to communicate itself from his addresses and from his pulpit ministrations to me. I rejoiced, moreover, in Mr. Arthur's example, because I thought that a certain ideal which I had long had before me, seemed to be realised,—the ideal of a minister of the truth who did not disdain the graces of style, and who could appreciate somewhat even of exuberance in the imagination of others, but who at the same time took care in all his utterances to aim at the heart. I did not then imagine that there was any incongruity between the two things, and I do not imagine so now. I have never had any reason to change the opinion I then formed, that it was possible to present truth in the form most congenial to my own mind and imagination, and at the same time deal sternly with the conscience. I cannot—though I may seem to ‘speak as a fool’ in saying so—I cannot remember the time when I did not try, at any rate, to deal with the conscience. I set it before me in the beginning of my ministry, and although that ministry has been marked by many imperfections, which none feel more painfully than I do, I know that I have, by the grace of God, tried to save sinners.

“When I became a Methodist preacher I began where I should like all young men to begin now—in one of the worst Circuits of Methodism. I started from the lowest step of the ladder, and I am quite sure the discipline was an immense advantage to me. . . . After the first ten years of my ministerial life, a wonderful fact was brought to my knowledge by my late dear friend, Edward Corderoy, who had a fancy for arithmetical calculations of that kind. It may be remembered that I was enabled, by God's blessing, to raise in six months, by lecturing, some thousand pounds for the relief of Spitalfields Chapel. Edward Corderoy, as some of you remember, wrote a series of letters on ministerial stipends. In the course of those letters he entered into some calculations, and wrote me a letter telling me that he shrewdly suspected I had been the instrument of gaining more for Methodism during those six months than Methodism had given me in ten years. It turned out, when I came to add up my income

for the first ten years of my ministry, that it did not amount to anything like a thousand pounds. I may therefore quote my experience as a warning against those who would enter the Methodist ministry for a morsel of bread. I do not know that I have been happier in the whole course of my ministerial life than in some of those first Circuits. I was learning all the time, and I greatly regret that I did not learn more. Anxious chiefly for the fulfilment of immediate duties, I did not lay the foundation I ought for the accuracy and self-control of the thorough student, and I have regretted it ever since. . . .

"One lesson I learned very early, and, as most people learn lessons, by painful experience. I learned it by one of my own faults, and the rebuke which that fault received. For the last eighteen or twenty years I can say I have, by God's grace, made it a rule of conduct never to depreciate my brethren. . . . I have endeavoured always to find out what there was of good in everybody. I have found it a wonderful help in gaining and in keeping the love of my brethren, and a real help, I think, to the cause of God, because I find that if I, as a minister of Christ, uphold the reputation of my brethren, other people are likely to do so too. . . .

"I am supposed to be fairly liberal in some things, but I am intensely conservative in my love of England. I am conscious of a great wrench of feeling in thinking of residence in a distant land. . . . I want the prayers of my friends to sustain me at every step. I am travelling under the guidance of God ; I go, therefore, without misgiving. I have committed my way to Him, and He will direct my steps. . . .

"I thank God for the ministry and laity of the Church. I thank God for the godly men who are standing forth in connection with other Churches. I sympathise greatly with the Church of England in her present troubles, and I pray to God to bring her out of them. I sympathise greatly with the efforts which our nonconformist brethren are making : I do not look upon them in the spirit of jealousy—I never did. May God bless all our Churches, and always ! I do not know whether we shall meet on earth again. I trust we shall. But I want to walk in the way God would have me, and do just what He wills me to do.

‘Serve with a single heart and eye
And to His glory live and die.’”

Thus did his friends send him forth, encompassed with their love and followed by their prayers, as with calm and steadfast mind he faced the unknown future, and went to find a vocation and a home beyond the sea.

CHAPTER XI.

1868.

CANADA. Aged 44.

Voyage to New York.—Church Building in America.—First Impressions of Canada.—General Conference of Methodist Episcopal Church, Chicago.—Conference Excursion.—Camp Meetings.

ON April 14th, 1868, Mr. Punshon, accompanied by his eldest son, sailed from Liverpool for New York. The voyage is thus described in his letter to the *Methodist Recorder* of London :—

“Our good ship, the *Scotia*, perhaps the finest mercantile vessel afloat, left Liverpool with a fair wind, and steamed rapidly down the channel, with one hundred and fifty-three passengers bound for the Western World. The sea was so calm and bright that many deluded themselves into forgetfulness that it was treacherous as an April sky. We made Queens-town harbour by 8 A.M. on the morning of Sunday, April 12th, and waited there until half-past three for the latest mails to come on board. . . . I suppose there can be nothing more humbling than a voyage at sea. It is a marvellous mortifier of pride. The most pompous Don Sancho is not likely to stand upon his dignity when he can hardly stand upon his feet. I believe there are those who are so abnormally constituted as to feel a defiant pleasure in the wayward element, but I do not aspire to such lofty philosophy. I am content, as a rule, to admire the grandeur of the waves from the shore, and am not insensible to the force of that particular part of ‘the rest that remaineth,’ which is assured by the promise that ‘there shall be no more sea.’ . . . Still there is something grand even to awfulness in the thought of utter helplessness which you feel at sea. Sky and water, with no living thing visible over the vast expanse ; for days together, just your own vessel with its human freight—and God ! To

a thoughtful mind there is no surer teaching both of humility and of trust.

“From the time we entered the Atlantic until close upon our arrival in New York, we had persistent head-winds, so that, if we would advance at all, we must make gallant way against them. Indeed, save only that we were mercifully preserved from peril, we had in our eleven day’s voyage a compression of the experience of all possible voyages. I could not help thinking it set forth in similitude the history of many a Christian life. Calm at the start ; broken and troubled water when the Atlantic surges met us ; heavy gales, blowing furiously against our progress ; a sea majestic in its wrath, now making the ship to shake with trembling, now drenching it with showers of spray ; the presence of three large icebergs, beautiful but dangerous neighbours ; a shroud of fog which wrapped the heavens from our sight for a day and a half, during which the dreary fog-horn groaned out its dirge-like sound ; calmer water as we approached the land ; and then a brilliant sun, and a sea of exquisite beauty, as we sailed through the Narrows and anchored in a fair haven.

“The passengers who are grouped together in temporary intercourse on the voyage, are always an interesting study. Ours were for the most part intelligent and gentlemanly, with much respect for the ordinances of religion. They were of several nations, and of many pursuits in life. A New York banker and a Boston editor sit side by side with Liverpool merchants and young English soldiers. Yonder is a Spanish count, bilious and gloomy—here an aged apostle of temperance, who has spent a fortune in the spread of information upon its principles, and who has just had an interview with the Emperor of the French, whom he hopes to convert by and by. There is the popular author of *Framley Parsonage*, yonder the ‘stump orator’ of a company of itinerant minstrels—popular also, though on a lower level. Here is a lady with two children, on her way to join her husband in California, who will be six weary weeks before she reaches the end of her travel. We had also on board a cool specimen of an American trader, who was currently rumoured to have with him a large quantity of what would be purchased at Niagara, as genuine ‘Table Rock,’ but which was in reality Derbyshire spar, which he had been to England to buy.

“It was a work of no small difficulty, and yet a privilege of no common order, to be permitted to preach on two Sabbaths in the ship’s saloon. The motley gathering—the crew (all of them who could be spared from duty), dressed in their Sunday best, and grouped in the lower part of the saloon ; the passengers of different nations, habits, beliefs, modes of thought, but all reverently gathered for the acknowledgment of God, and all apparently sincere in their responses to the litany of prayer, and respectful in their listening to the Word of Life—made the services at once novel and impressive. Our captain read the Liturgy—an office which he never

delegates to another, and right well he read it too—with a sonorous voice and appropriate emphasis, to attain which many an authorised reader of the service on land might well sit at his feet—and I endeavoured afterwards to rouse my hearers and myself to Christian manliness and heroism. The ‘bread’ thus ‘cast upon the waters’ may haply be ‘found after many days.’

“A welcome awaited me before landing in New York; the provident kindness of some friends in England had secured that I should be met on the steamer, and the passage of my luggage through the customs facilitated. For this I was very grateful, for the five or six hours’ waiting before you can get fairly landed is irksome and oppressive.

“In the evening I went with my host to St. Paul’s Methodist Episcopal Church, a fine marble building, which will seat about twelve hundred persons. The week-evening services, however, are not held in the church but in the lecture room. The lecture was brief—a pointed and well-reasoned exhortation to fidelity, based upon the promise that ‘a faithful man shall be blessed of the Lord.’ After the lecture the leaders were called forward, and a prayer-meeting began. The minister kept only a nominal lead of the meeting, persons from the body of the room starting a lively verse as the inspiration seemed to prompt them; but the prayers were thoughtful and fervent, and those who prayed had power with God. The prayer-meeting in turn resolved itself into a brief band-meeting, and within about a quarter of an hour five of the members, male and female, had spoken their experiences. It had the good, sound, Methodist ring about it, and I augured well for the Church whose inner life was thus healthy and abiding. Among those who spoke at the band-meeting was the wife of one of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Before the meeting broke up I was introduced to the Church, and made welcome to American soil, and all was done with a frank and hearty brotherliness which affected me not a little.

“There was to be on the following day the dedication of a new and elegant church in Williamsburg, a suburb of the city on the Brooklyn side, and the minister who was appointed to preach in the evening was taken suddenly ill, and as it seemed an emergency, I overcame my reluctance and opened my commission in America in the empire city. Bishop Janes introduced me kindly to the people, and I felt freedom and some measure of power in proclaiming the Word of Life. There were several things which struck me as novelties. Immediately in front was a table for the reporters; to the right of the tribune a pedestal, on which was a very beautiful bouquet of flowers. The church was lighted like the British House of Commons, and the rays streaming through coloured glass fell with a softened lustre which was cheerful without being dazzling. The total cost of the church was \$200,000, or about £40,000. My only regret about it is that five less expensive churches have not been

built instead of this costly one, although for the large accommodation of every kind which has been provided, the money is not ill-bestowed."

To a man of strong sympathies, the customs and institutions of his native land become so dear that something of antipathy to foreign institutions and customs seems almost inevitable. What is of another land is to us Englishmen ridiculous, and we must borrow of another tongue the word *foreign*—a word free from the smack of contempt that clings to our native word *outlandish*. The best cure for this prejudice, natural to all men, but particularly strong in Englishmen, is travel—personal observation and experience of other lands and peoples. This is a sure cure in the case of thoughtful, generous minds, where the vice in question is but a virtue gone to seed. Such a mind was Mr. Punshon's, and such was the immediate effect of travel on his mind.

Evidences of changed convictions may from time to time be seen in him; but his broadened sympathies did not narrow again, and become confined to the land of his adoption. Instances of such reaction are not wanting in America. Men have come from the Old World to the New with the most violent prejudices against everything in the New, and in favour of everything in the Old. After a few years such ill-balanced heads are found completely turned, loving all that once they hated, and alas! hating all that once they loved. However Mr. Punshon may have learnt to tolerate, and even to admire, some of the peculiarities of the New World, Old England never for one moment lost her hold on his loyalty and affection.

The architecture of the Brooklyn Church, at whose dedication he assisted, impressed him as something new. He had just come from a land of a National Church, and of grand architectural monuments—the work of many generations. The instinct of the religious feeling to express itself in art had been satisfied in England, and modern religious activity was turned in other directions. But in America are no Westminster Abbeys, and no venerable cathedrals—the heir-looms of the ages. The men of this age must be the builders, and if the art-instinct is to be satisfied at all, it must be by free churches and voluntary endeavour. Upon the Methodist Church in America, therefore, has come a burden and a privilege from which the Methodist Church in Great Britain has been to a great extent relieved. The different aspect of things at once impressed him, but he did not perceive all at once the forces at work, or the reasons why the Methodists of Brooklyn did not build five less expensive churches instead of this costly one. At a later period he fully realised the different claims of different circumstances, and heartily responded to them. In the city of Toronto, as we shall see by and by, he was the most active spirit in the building of the Metropolitan Church—the most imposing church in a city that is sometimes called the City of Churches.

The following are his observations and impressions of peculiarities, some of which, we hope, are soon to disappear. It may be well, therefore, to have a record of them:—

“The Methodist Book Concern, in a dingy street, is a very commodious

building, and the centre of an enterprising trade. The publishers showed me the proof of my own *Chimes*, in which they had established a private copyright without any knowledge on my part. They have succeeded in bringing out a much handsomer volume than the original. I suppose I ought to feel flattered and grateful for the compliment, but somehow I don't. They say it is only a mild example of the *lex talionis*, as some of their works have recently been published in England. Well, I suppose after we have both 'shot the rapids,' there will be an international copyright by which our remote posterity may gather the fruit of their own labour.

"After two days' enjoyment of the frank and generous hospitality of New York friends—a hospitality which could not have been greater or more freely exercised—I took my seat with a strange sense of novelty 'on board' the cars for the long railway ride to Montreal. An Englishman, who is a sort of travelling mollusc, very apt to draw into his shell, has something to overcome before he can approve the American system of cars, where, according to the Irishman's reckoning, 'one man is as good as another, and a great deal better.' Fancy long unwieldy carriages, a great height above the track, in which sixty or eighty people, who have no privilege of choice, are huddled together. Here is a bishop who wants to study his forthcoming homily,—but on a seat with him is a baby who breaks in upon the thread of the bishop's discourse at intervals, by delivering a discourse of its own with much earnestness and 'with no language but a cry.' Here are emigrants with their bundles; there are soldiers with their arms; yonder are felons *en route* to the State prison. Some of your fellow-passengers are—well, say salivacious; some are stertorous, some are infragant, some are inquisitive. But there you are with no privacy, and no rest, if you travel for a thousand miles. Well, but the sleeping cars, what of them? Are they not a luxury unknown in the eastern world? If the roads were solidly constructed, and the wheels ran smoothly, and you could resign yourselves to slumber with a tolerable probability of waking in a whole skin, they might be luxuries; but as these are all of them contingencies, the advantage is doubtful, to say the least, and hardly compensates for the additional outlay of dollars.

"After having passed Hartford, Connecticut, hallowed to me as the home of Mrs. Sigourney, we got into one of these sleeping cars at Springfield, in the State of Massachusetts. About three in the morning came the conductor with a voice ominous as the croak of a raven, 'You must get up and change cars; there has been a smash on the line.' And, to be sure, there had been a serious collision, and in the darkness we had to grope our way, lighted only by newly kindled fires, which made the darkness and the havoc more ghastly, past the battered engine and the overturned leviathan cars, to a train which awaited us on the other side, at a distance of about a quarter of a mile. By this delay we lost connections, so that our mishaps were not all over. As there are only single

tracks for the most part, no special train could forward us, and we were detained ten hours at St. Albans, a place unknown to fame and song, except in connection with the St. Albans' raid, of which the papers spoke a year or two ago. The day at St. Albans wore its slow length along, redeemed from tediousness by the society of Montreal friends, who had come out to meet us, and by an enchanting view of the expanse of Lake Champlain, and at length, about 10 P.M., we crossed the magnificent bridge over the St. Lawrence, and were again in Queen Victoria's dominions, and safely housed in the good city of Montreal.

"From Montreal we wend our way to Ottawa, the capital of the Dominion, chosen, it is to be presumed, partly because of its distance from the frontier, and partly because they who chose it had strong faith in the future. Rough roads, cedar swamps, snake fences, wooden shanties, ground partially cleared, with black unsightly stumps of trees left to decay, everything betokening the dawning of civilisation in a neighbourhood where the sun is rather slow to rise, all these signs meet as the train winds along between Prescott and Ottawa. It is interesting to see places like these in their beginnings. No prophet can prophecy what they may hereafter become. Ottawa is very beautifully situated upon the river from which it gets its name. The Houses of Parliament stand upon a bold bluff of rock, and are very imposing. The interior arrangements will hold their own in comparison with St. Stephen's. They are most commodious and comfortable. I saw the Houses in session, and conversed with several of the senators and members of the Legislature. Sir John A. Macdonald, the Premier, has a profile almost exactly like that of the Premier of England, and is said to resemble him in character as well as in face. I suppose between twenty and thirty of the members of the Dominion and Provincial Parliaments are members of the Methodist Church, and some of them are men of considerable ability, and are likely to make their mark upon their time. This is as it should be, and as it will be by-and-by at home."

LETTER TO THE "METHODIST RECORDER."

"The impression made upon my mind at Victoria University was most favourable. Since the charter was granted there have been nearly six hundred graduates in the several faculties of arts, law, and medicine.* Many of these were present, strong and hearty in their affection for their Alma Mater; and the addresses which were delivered at the Alumni dinner (a dinner, by the way, where all the toasts were drunk in water), while they attested the most unmistakable loyalty to British institutions,

* A faculty of theology has been added to the University and a union effected with Albert College. There are now (1887) more than 1,800 graduates.

gave the evidence of ability which would not disgrace a British House of Commons. There were two members of the legislature present, both graduates of Victoria College ; physicians, barristers, mayors, merchants, all filling reputable positions in life, linked in affection and interest to an institution which boldly and manfully proclaims herself a Wesleyan University. I rejoiced greatly in the influence which is thus wielded for our own Church, and should deplore as a grievous calamity anything which would impair it. The Legislature of Ontario has been accustomed to give an annual grant towards the college funds, but they are threatening to withdraw all grants from denominational colleges, and are wishful to bring about an affiliation of all such colleges to the Toronto University. If such affiliation could be accomplished on equal terms, and without the cession of the University Charter, it might be an advantage ; but I confess that the reconciliation of class interests even here seems so difficult, and the ultimate benefit so doubtful, that I should be glad to see the Methodist people render themselves practically independent of the intrigues or fickleness of politicians altogether. Not that I would have them give up their just claims upon the Legislature. They have made great sacrifices for the higher education of the country on the faith of State help, and in some way or other, either by a sum fixed according to expenditure and results, or by a sum paid down in lieu of all future demands, this claim must be met, or the reputation of the province would be tarnished and its future put in peril. *Di avertite omen.*

“From Cobourg to Toronto the country still improves in appearance, and begins to look (nearly a month later) something like the green England which I left, each day developing some new secret of the spring. Toronto is a fine, well-built city, with a more English appearance than many others. Some of its public buildings are very fine, especially the University and the educational buildings, over which our friend the Rev. Dr. Ryerson presides—the informing soul, so to speak, of the whole system of common-school education in Upper Canada, a man who has had the rare privilege of building his own monument, and that more durably than in brass or marble.”

LETTER TO THE “METHODIST RECORDER.”

“May, 1868.

“During my whole stay in the wonderful city of Chicago, I was in a state of chronic bewilderment, and became so accustomed to be astonished that there ceased to be any novelty in the sensation of surprise. Here I stood in the largest grain emporium in the world.

“The word *corn* in America means Indian corn exclusively, all other kinds are *grain*.

“With two hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, substantial buildings, tiers of lofty warehouses, miles of docks, hotels vying with the ‘Langham’

and the 'Grosvenor' in size ; yet fifty years ago the long grass of the prairie waved unbroken, and the Indian paddled his canoe with no pale-faces near him, save those who were condemned to inhabit the old prison-like fort, whose remnant in the last stage of dilapidation they show you to-day. I suppose for rapidity of growth there is no parallel to it in all the world. It was impressed upon me most vividly from a fact which their chroniclers record, that in 1838—just thirty years ago—the inhabitants of Chicago—then numbering some six hundred—were alarmed at nightfall by the howling of a wolf, turned out to destroy it, *and killed thirty-eight wolves before morning*. After this, one ceases to wonder at any tales of progress. This growth of cities in this vast continent is marvellous indeed. Although Chicago exhibits it on the largest scale, the thing is normal through the whole of the vast Western territory.

“ The General Conference has been so often described that it would hardly profit to repeat the description. Your readers know that it is held once in four years ; that it is composed of delegates elected by the annual Conferences ; that it is presided over by the bishops in turn, and that its functions are appellate and legislative ; strangers are admitted to the galleries and beyond the bar ; but even this distinction is practically ignored, and as but few of the ministers have any distinctive dress, it is not easy, if it were desired, to tell who are members of Conference, and who are there by courtesy only. As Chicago was crowded with visitors, brought there by the double attraction of the Conference and the Republican Convention, there was more excitement than usual ; but I saw lay men and ladies—with apparently equal rights—seated fast by reverend seigniors, as if the vexed question had been settled, and each district and each Dorcas meeting had elected delegate or damsel of its own. The church in which the Conference was held stands in “ Methodist Block,” so called because the square of houses is all trust property. The Chicagoans pride themselves upon their far-sighted shrewdness in securing it. All the lower part is occupied by shops or stores, and as the block is in a commanding situation and in the heart of the city, these shops are let easily and for a high rent, so that the trustees have a revenue of about \$30,000 or £6,000 sterling for purposes of church extension, by which they have already aided largely in the building of churches in other parts of Chicago. My first impression of the Conference was taken from the gallery, and I was much in the condition of the man who looked down the chimney at the fire, and who was bewildered and blinded by the smoke. It would not, therefore, be fair to record it. Further observation convinced me of the majesty of the Conference, and of its enormous moral power. I do not think it is so orderly nor so reverent as our own. The presence of enthusiastic strangers, who applauded as if they had a right to do so, and who on certain occasions are asked to vote, is a sore temptation to speech-making. The mode in which they express their wish for a vote to be counted seems

to be unhappy. When the bishop has ruled a question to be carried on a show of hands, some brother will jerk out the word 'Doubted,' when the vote must be taken again and the numbers declared; I saw this done on one occasion when there were some twenty votes on one side and nearly two hundred on the other. But with all this, there is a devotedness, a oneness of purpose, a careless sense of freedom, an appreciativeness of good intention, a general moderation, a brotherly kindness, and an evident and self-sacrificing desire for the glory of Christ, that are above all praise. The kindness of the Conference and of the bishops to myself personally, or rather to myself officially, for they saw in me the representative of the British Conference, was unbounded. Bishop Janes met me at the station on my arrival, though it was eleven o'clock at night, and the three senior bishops met me at the cars on my departure, and very cordially wished me God speed. I feel unworthy to be thus served by men at whose feet I would willingly sit, because of their experience and successes in the Master's service. I suppose I must have shaken hands with the whole Conference, so many pressed forward—some full of old country memories; some with brimming eyes at some roused thought of home; some true Americans, but with frank and kindly feeling to Great Britain—and all servants of Christ; and wearing themselves out in His toil. Amongst others I was glad to grasp the hand of Peter Cartwright—full of years, but racy and trenchant as ever—while many whose names are well known in England, Durbin, Kidder, McClintock, George and Jesse J. Peck, Slicer of Baltimore, Eddy, Curry, Faster, Haven, etc., honoured me with their conversation and friendship. This General Conference has been noticeable for the admission of coloured men as delegates. There were seven of them, fine, intelligent-looking men, of all shades, from glossy black to dingy brown. I was glad to be permitted to be present, when by a vote, which was practically unanimous, colour was adjudged to be no longer a disqualification for any office in the Church. Hail to the day when true freedom shall prevail, and the great tides of love flood with all-embracing waves the little miserable enclosures, 'in whose eddying depths,' earth's charity has been so often 'drowned.'"

On the 14th of May, Mr. Punshon was introduced to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as the representative of the English Wesleyan Church. At the same time were introduced the representatives of the Wesleyan Church in Canada, the Rev. Egerton Ryerson, D.D., LL.D., and the Rev. Matthew Ritchie, D.D. Methodism in

America was just entering the second century of its existence. There were at that time under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, sixty-eight annual Conferences, with a membership of 1,146,081 and a ministry of 8,000 men.*

Mr. Punshon was introduced to the Conference in the kindest terms by Bishop Janes, and was greeted with enthusiastic and long-continued applause. His address produced a profound impression. It is remembered and quoted to the present day. The speaker showed, of course, that he understood the people and the matters that he was to represent, but what surprised and won his hearers was the discovery that he understood them also, and entered with a rare and generous sympathy into their own thoughts and feelings.

The following reference to his predecessors is characteristic of Mr. Punshon

“I think of honoured men in whose footsteps I am called to tread. I cannot forget that since your last General Conference, two of those who on former occasions have worthily represented us have passed to their abiding home. In the midst of the elders among you, I am persuaded that the memory of Dr. Hannah is fragrant and undying. And you are reminded of his genius, of his spirit, and of his ripe theological learning, of the charity which had its home in his heart, of his simple open face, and the pathos and power of his pulpit addresses, and of that odour of sanctity which was expressed in every action of his life; all these told even the thoughtless of the blessedness of a walk with God. You will not wonder at the affectionate veneration with which we are accustomed to enshrine in our hearts the memory of that saintly man.

* According to the Methodist Year Book, there were in January 1, 1887 in the United States, 27,000 travelling preachers, and 4,000,000 members, and a constituency of over 15,000,000, or more than one-fourth of the population of the entire country—56,000,000. In the Methodist Episcopal Church alone were 12,800 travelling preachers, and 2,000,000 members in full connection.

“And yet more fresh and vivid in the memory of most of you, will be one who four years ago was the eloquent expositor of British Wesleyan Methodism ; who, in your fair city of Philadelphia, glowed with his abounding love towards the brethren, and like Elijah, was taken from us ; and to whom such touching and proper reference was made in the address that has been read. We were not prepared for Mr. Thornton's departure. He had just returned from his visit to your shores with enlarged experience, and with the warmer love which springs from closer knowledge. We were anticipating for him wider fields and holier triumphs, when suddenly the Master spake, and he was not ; and we were left in our sorrow to cry as we tracked his flight : ‘ My Father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof.’ ”

To a question then much discussed in Anglican circles at home he referred as follows :—

“Perhaps some of you may have read that there has been conversation about us lately in a notable ecclesiastical assembly, the convocation of the ministry of the Established Church of England, in the province of York, and that in the newspapers of the country there has been a good deal of discussion about a contemplated reunion between us and the Church of England. Now union is a very blessed thing. In view of the loss to the world, it is a thousand pities there should be a distracted Church. . . .

“There has been no proposition of union at all. There has been some talk of *absorption*, and if you take the Pan-Anglican idea of the matter, it would be the less absorbing the greater, which is a problem in dynamics hitherto unknown. If we would only consent to be absorbed quietly we might have certain concessions made. We should be allowed to have spiritual services, and to be somewhat enthusiastic in our own way, and some of us, highly favoured, might be exalted to positions of honour. So, perhaps to read these things from far, you may suppose we may be flattered by them, and that we are in danger of being ensnared ; but to us they are simply amusing. The time has long gone by for us to listen to any propositions of union except on equal terms.

“We are not ‘united Societies’ now ; we are a Church, with a godly order, with a compact and yet flexible organisation, with a pure creed, with gospel authority, with a practical and workable discipline, with a Divine and hallowed life. And there are hundreds of thousands of those who are our joy and crown to whom we can say in the words of the Book, ‘If we are not apostles unto others, doubtless we are apostles unto you, for the seal of our apostleship are ye in the Lord,’ and our answer to them that do examine us is this. . . .

“I do rejoice most unfeignedly that, by the kindness of my brethren, I am permitted to-day to bear to you their fraternal greetings, to assure you

that the entire British Conference feels towards you and towards your nation the very heartiest good-will.

"I know, for I have had opportunities for knowing—opportunities derived from a large experience, now extending over, I am afraid to say how many years of travelling throughout the length and breadth of our land—that the great heart of England, its muscle and sinew, all that is best and strongest in it, is sound, and is cordial in this matter.

"I do not come among you to say this as a renegade Englishman, currying favour with you to secure a poor popularity by abasing my own institutions, and by exalting yours. These are honest English eyes that look straight into yours, eyes that have seen no fairer land than England, but I feel that I should have a small soul indeed if I could withhold my frank, genial admiration of your great country, and my prayer that its future may be a future of increasing glory. May the great city in which we are assembled, a city without parallel for rapidity of growth in the world, be the type of your national prosperity! They tell me that it was lifted up out of the swamp so noiselessly that men ate and drank during the process without inconvenience and without fear.

"Now that is the moral achievement which I hope for you. Not only on account of patriotism, not only because of fraternal feeling, but in my hope for the world do I trust that the two great nations which we respectively represent may work always in harmonious accord."

TO THE "METHODIST RECORDER."

"They do things on a large scale in America. The directors of the railway invited the Conference to an excursion to the Mississippi, a trifling distance of a hundred and eighty-eight miles, and on Saturday, May 16th, three hundred and six availed themselves of the invitation. As we passed along our sensations of wonder were so frequently excited that it grew into a marvellous journey. I found myself seated beside a stalwart, weather-beaten minister, who claimed to introduce himself on the original ground *that he, as a member of the General Conference, had travelled twice as far to attend its sessions as I had.* I could not help admiring the energy which had brought him so far, perhaps to sit speechless in a crowded church for a month. Anon came another marvel. We were crossing a veritable prairie, 'a boundless contiguity' of grass, without a particle of 'shade.' There it stretched for miles on miles—flat, green, fertile, endless. It was my first acquaintance with a prairie, and it required but little fancy to realise all I ever read—elk and antelope, wolf and buffalo; the bull frog, making night hideous; the prairie-bird flashing on the wing; dusky Indians trapping fur, their game, and no sign of a pale-face to create either astonishment or anger. But railroads are sad iconoclasts, and the iron horse has frightened from the track all these accompaniments of the former time, and has borne hither thriving farmers who flourish and fatten

upon the affluent soil. By and by the broad stream of the Mississippi was reached and crossed, and we were in the State of Iowa. The end of our excursion was the city of Clinton, numbering seven thousand inhabitants, with handsome streets, shops, hotels, club-houses, etc., all of stone. In 1854, just fourteen years ago, it was all prairie! On the arrival of the excursion train at Clinton, we walked in procession to the hotel, where an *impromptu* repast had been prepared by a united effort of all Christian denominations in the city.

"I left Chicago with regret. It became endeared to me by much hospitality. Indianapolis was next visited, and then Cincinnati, the 'Porkopolis' of the Union—a fine, handsome city, with a decidedly English appearance, and the suburbs of which, called Clifton, would not disgrace the Clifton of my memory and love. Here I spent a very interesting Sabbath, and preached in a pulpit provided with two rather novel articles of furniture—a fan and spittoon. In coming out of the church I was accosted with, 'How are you, sir; I am from Bristol,' with a warm shake of the hand, and an eye in which the tears were dancing. A few paces more, and a husband and wife stopped me: 'We are from Sheffield; we were both in Messrs. Cole's establishment.' Shortly afterward another couple. 'We came from Rotherham about twelve months since.' Oh, the gladness of an old-country greeting in a land of strangers! 'As iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man his friend. During my stay in Cincinnati, I visited the cemetery in which Robert Wallace lies, and gazed with mournful interest upon the monument erected over his remains. He was a good and able man, and there are many on both sides of the Atlantic who keep his memory green.

"I have twice had the opportunity of seeing the true American camp-meeting. From the hospitable home of my friend, Mr. Elliott, at Dobb's Ferry, on the Hudson, I drove to the famous Sing Sing camp ground, passing on the way the spot where poor Major André was arrested, and near the beloved 'Sunnyside' of Washington Irving. I was hardly prepared for anything so systematic or so vast. The ground covers eight acres, and is held by trustees, like any other Church property. On this ground was erected a city of tabernacles, with main and side avenues, intersected by First, Second, Third, and Fourth Streets. The avenues converge to a large circular space, at one end of which was the preachers' tent, with the stand in front, from which the addresses were delivered. Some of those who reside in the city have tents of their own, with parlour, and bedroom, and kitchen, so that they may extemporise a home, and at the time of my visit there were families who had been 'dwelling in tents' for a fortnight in anticipation of the camp-meeting services. The worshippers are called to the service by the sound of a silver trumpet, and in fact the entire organisation reminded me of the compliment which Dr. Chalmers paid to the Rev. George Thompson, of whom he said, 'he had never seen a man

set about the work of saving souls in such a business-like way.' For some days before the day of my visit, the weather had been unusually showery, which had somewhat diminished the attendance, but when I preached in the afternoon there could not have been fewer than four thousand people present, and on the following Sabbath I understand there were twice that number. I afterwards attended a meeting on the Ebenezer camp-ground, near Wilton, in Ontario, Canada, which, on the whole, pleased me better. There was less preparation and more nature. Some two hundred conveyances of all kinds and sizes were hitched to the trees, the horses taking it as quietly as if they knew the wherefore of the gathering. The circle was a clearing in a forest over-arched by a leafy shadow of elm, maple, and pine. The tents were ruder and fewer; the cross-sticks supported the cooking-kettles in approved gipsy fashion; but there was the same earnest spirit of work; and as I gazed upon the mass of upturned faces, three thousand of them at the least, with the silvery moonlight glancing through the bright leaves overhead, and the ruddy camp-fires throwing radiance upon strong features, I thought I had rarely seen a spectacle so sublime, and it was to me an opportunity awful and yet inspiring, to preach in that cathedral of God's own architecture, 'all the words of this life.' I can easily conceive that in the wrong hands, managed by those whose zeal is not according to knowledge, these meetings may be occasions of extravagance and mischief; but many with whom I conversed, and those among the thoughtful and godly of our people, both in the States and in Canada, assured me that their fruits abound and abide."

The following account of an Indian camp-meeting was written some two years after Mr. Punshon's arrival in America, but it is given here with his description of the latest type of camp-meeting as seen at Sing Sing, and the more primitive type as seen at Wilton:—

"In company with several ministers and friends, I embarked at Collingwood on the steamer *Waubuno* bound for Parry Sound, where a camp-meeting of whites and Indians was being held. The Georgian Bay, whose vast expanse stretched out before us, is a mighty arm of Lake Huron, and is said to contain more than twenty thousand islands of all sizes, many of them rocky and desolate, but some fertile and exquisitely wooded. A sail of twenty-four miles brought us to a group of islands named respectively 'Hope,' 'Beckwith,' and 'Christian'—embraced in our Church enterprise as the Christian Islands Mission. Here we took on board the missionary,

his family, and some of his flock. There is a neat church on the most thickly peopled island, and some eighty-five members are under the missionary's care. With the exception of the keeper of the lighthouse, there are no other whites on the island than the missionary's family. About half a mile off is a small pagan village; and here, almost secluded from society, hearing from the outer world but once a week under the most favourable circumstances, obliged like the ant to lay in food for the winter before the frost shall grasp and harden the waters, travelling often upon snow shoes twenty miles across the ice to a distant appointment, and but poorly paid for all, at least in this world's lucre, the man of God lives and labours with a faith and endurance and cheerfulness worthy of apostolic times. For about twenty-two miles the steamer threaded its way through a succession of islands which seemed almost interminable, and then we swept round a headland and entered a capacious sound, in which navies might float securely and with ample room. Nestled among the inlets lies the village of Parry Sound, a thriving settlement of about three hundred inhabitants, where ten years ago was the primeval forest. Christian enterprise has been privileged to found a prosperous community here, with grist mill, store, hotel, saw-mill, etc., in active operation. The proprietors, Messrs. J. and W. Bealty & Co., who are the lessees of the timber limits, and owners of the steamboat and lumber mill, are pushing merchants, and good Methodists to boot. The younger brother is an active member of Parliament, an equally active local preacher, and a sort of resident lord of the manor.

"The camp-ground is in a most romantic spot, about a mile from the village. It is a glade in the forest. Between it and the village is a ridge of rock sixty feet high, its natural bulwark, and below it a path slopes gently to a small cove in the sound, where the boats of the Indians are moored. As I first entered it in the dusk of the evening, the scene was picturesque in the extreme. In the centre, at the lower end of the ground, was a large frame booth—the preacher's stand—from which a minister was addressing about three hundred people. At the higher end, immediately opposite, stood a large wooden building, called the prayer-tent. All around on either side were tents of every size and shape, some of wood, some of canvas, some of boughs of trees hung upon a skeleton frame, in which the Indians and others camped for the occasion. As we passed by the wigwams, perhaps an old squaw, withered with age, and smoking strenuously the while, would lift up the canvas to have a better look at the stranger; or some bright little papoose would frame his face in the folds and glance archly at the passer-by. Five large fires blazed upon the camp-ground, raised on stages about eight feet high. After the public service the whites adjourned to the prayer-tent, and the Indians, two hundred of them, gathered in front of the preacher's stand, and held a prayer-meeting among themselves. Deep devotion and intense fervour

of spirit characterised this meeting. Some were in deep distress and wailed plaintively for mercy, others were so overcome by their emotions that they swooned away. Three or four were thus prostrated at one time. The exercises were continued far into the night, and in true brotherhood of worship the whites ever and anon sang out some song of Zion, and before it died away the Indians took up the refrain, and in their own tongue joined in their 'strange hosannas,' their swarth faces lit up with radiance, and thrown into relief by the blazing pine-knots which crackled in the evening air. It was a sight to charm a poet into rapture, and to constrain from a Christian heart a burst of thanksgiving to God.

" 'The Sabbath day was an high day.' The breakfast hour was seven o'clock, and immediately afterwards small companies gathered, according to previous arrangements, in various tents for prayer. The morning service was announced for ten o'clock, but before it commenced six Indian babes received the rite of baptism, administered in their own language by the Rev. Allan Salt, a native minister. I also baptised the child of a white settler, and preached to the people, in a cathedral of God's own architecture, 'all the words of this life.'

" Mr. Salt followed with an extemporised translation of my sermon in the Ojibway language. A brief interval for dinner, and then the services were resumed. A brother preached to the whites, and I addressed the Indians through an interpreter. There were several pagan Indians from neighbouring settlements on the ground, drawn irresistibly to the spot, and yet afraid, as the Christian Indians said, to bring themselves under the power of the Word.

" A collection was made for the support of a missionary to the Indian tribes. Glancing around the audience my eye had lighted upon a poor ill-dressed, afflicted, and somewhat uncleanly Indian, standing, like the publican, afar off. I was mentally contrasting him with many around him, and wondering whether such as he, pagan as I deemed him, and stolid as he seemed to be, were likely to be reached and rescued. The friends who made the collection were evidently of my mind, for they had passed him by. What was my surprise to see his gaunt form stalking through the files of his companions, and striding up to the pastor in charge, with a piece of money in his hand, which he offered as his contribution with a smile that redeemed his homeliness into momentary beauty. And how much greater was the rebuke to my unbelief when, a few hours after, this same man, having been some time under instruction, formally renounced paganism and its errors, and was baptised in the presence of the multitude in the name of the 'Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

" There are glorious attestations to the power of Christ to save among those red men of the forest; and through many hindrances arising both from external circumstances and from peculiarities of national character, there have been, and there are, examples among them of eminent piety.

"The Christianity which the Indians embrace brings other blessings in its train. The whole of the Ojibways and Mohawks have ceased to be savages for many years ; some of them are highly intelligent, and one chief who was with us at the camp-meeting has recently been appointed a magistrate.

"Godliness is thus 'profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.'

"The Sabbath evening service was interrupted by heavy rain, but the rocks echoed back the sound of praise and prayer far into the night. At half-past seven on Monday morning the lovefeast began. Whites and Indians vied with each other in forwardness to testify for Christ. One fine old man, a superior chief from the Church of England Mission at Garden River, who was converted from paganism about three years ago, was especially earnest and even eloquent, in the witness which he bore for Jesus, and the faces of the Indians were a study as they sat and listened. They are not commonly demonstrative. The same stoicism which in the times of the war trail made them boast of meeting death without the moving a muscle, when he came in his most horrible forms, lingers about them yet, so that they wear no tell-tale faces, and rarely go beyond the 'ugh' of satisfaction and approval ; but the 'old man eloquent,' touched the springs both of laughter and tears. At the close of the lovefeast I read the Sacramental Service, and, with the ministers present, administered the Holy Communion in that forest sanctuary, with the glad sun shining brilliantly, making the leaves, glossy with the recent rain, to sparkle like sprays of silver ; and the fresh healthful breeze ever and anon shaking a shower like a bright chrism, down upon the worshippers below.

"I feel that I shall treasure the memory of this visit for the maintenance of my own faith in times of depression and of doubt. I believe more firmly than ever that there needs but the one Gospel for the 'one blood' of 'all nations of men,' and I thank God for this deepening conviction wrought by the sight of true missionary work on true missionary ground."

CHAPTER XII.

1868—1870.

CANADA. Aged 44 to 46.

The Canadian Conference, 1868.—Fraternal Greetings from Synod of Presbyterian Church.—Letters to Friends at Home.—Marriage.—Christmas.—Friendships.—Charities.—Church Building.—Methodist Union.—Missions.—Education.—Lecturing.—American Opinion.

DURING his stay in Canada, Mr. Punshon was for five successive years President of the Canadian Conference. For the first year (1868—1869) his appointment was made according to usage by the British Conference, on the nomination of the Canadian Conference. Year by year, for the next three years, the British Conference left the election of their President to the Canadians, and they always knew how to discern in the gifts, and graces, and fruits, that marked Mr. Punshon's ministry, sufficient warrant for making him their President—the first amongst the brethren. In 1872 the British Conference again exercised the right of appointment, and at the same time gave notice to the Canadian Church that the time had come when they expected to receive again the distinguished son whom they had lent to Canada.

His first Canadian Conference was held in the

city of Kingston, June, 1868. The following notice of this Conference is from the *Toronto Christian Guardian* :—

“What gave to the Conference a special attraction for the public, as well as the ministers, was the presence of the Rev. W. M. Punshon, M.A., as its honoured President. The fact that the parent Conference was willing to spare its most popular and eloquent preacher, one whose name has become of connexional interest in England, was taken as a proof that Canadian Methodism occupied no mean place in the esteem of our fathers and brethren at home. Mr. Punshon completely satisfied all expectations, and won all hearts. This is saying a great deal, for expectation had risen very high. Everything he said gave freshness to every occasion, as well as to every item of business. Perfect good nature and marked impartiality, marked all his utterances. Orators are not often good business men, in Church or State ; but the President seemed to see at once the bearings and relations of every matter that came up, and to be specially gifted with an intuition of the brethren’s names. The Conference sermon was preached by him. Many had read his sermons ; many had heard him preach in England and Canada, but never had they known him to be more ‘in the Spirit on the Lord’s day,’ never to occupy a higher, holier, elevation, than while preaching on that Conference Sabbath. His lecture after the close of the Conference on *John Wesley and his Times*, was full of original thought and illustrations. So much has been said, on this side of the Atlantic in the year of the American Centenary of Methodism, respecting *Wesley and his Times*, that many wished the lecturer had chosen a fresher subject ; but those who listened to the vivid and varied portraiture of the lecture, were delighted that he had chosen precisely that subject. Every topic is new when handled by the true orator.”

The Synod of the Presbyterian Church was in session in the city of Kingston at the same time as the Methodist Conference. A deputation from the Synod visited the Conference, who in return sent a deputation to the Synod. “Is not this a wonderful day ?” said a ministerial member of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada as the deputation from his Synod was returning from the Wesleyan Conference. It *was* a wonderful day ! We do not know that a Synod of the Scotch Church

ever before had sent such a deputation to any ecclesiastical assembly of another Church, certainly not to any Methodist Conference. The reception by the Conference of this deputation from the Church of Scotland was of the most Christian and brotherly kind. The address to the deputation by Mr. Punshon was admirable in taste and spirit. When he offered, in conclusion, "to join our Scotch friends in a 'Solemn league and covenant, against sin, and the *Man of sin*,' the meaning of the enthusiastic applause could not be mistaken."

The following letters will continue the story of Mr. Punshon's life, and at the same time show something of the love of home and friends, with which his heart was always aglow, even when he seemed to be absorbed in the activities of his public life:—

TO THE REV. W. O. BOOTH.

"TORONTO, *June 16th*, 1868.

"I am taking a lesson from Mr. Wesley to-day, and snatching a moment when I am detained from an expected journey, to send a word of remembrance to one who will ever live in my heart's affection. How are you? Do you keep the same cheerful, genial, winsome Christian that you have always been, bearing your infirmities with a courage that is dauntless, and with a grace and power which make your children glorify God in you?

"This is a wonderful country. I have lost no time, I assure you, since I first landed. My experience has certainly been enlarged by travel, and one's ideas naturally get wider as one mingles with the fellowship of men. I am pleased with the Canadian brethren. They are for the most part men of one purpose, and one aim.

"We have had a blessed Conference. There is considerable party feeling here, and I feared before I entered upon my work that it would be a great trouble to me; but it has been a great joy. There has not been a hard word—everything has gone on with the greatest harmony—and I was graciously helped in the public services as I have rarely been before. I am now on my way to the Eastern American Conference. I hope to reach St. John on Friday afternoon—this is Tuesday. The distances are

indeed magnificent. I have travelled nearly seven thousand miles since I left home, and it is very fatiguing, because so many of the trains run in the night. I came down to the wharf at two o'clock to-day, hoping to go by steamer to Montreal, and lo ! when I arrived, the Government, without giving notice to anybody, had chartered the boats for the conveyance of troops, and so there was no boat ! and I have to travel three hundred and thirty-three miles to Montreal by the dusty, slow, democratic rail, and all by night. You have had some changes in England since I left. Poor Spence Hardy ! Father Squance was in the Beulah country when I was in Portsmouth in February. Dr. Andrews and old S. Freeman are both gone home too, and among my friends—Mrs. Bailey, Clement Heeley's daughter, Mr. Newton of Thorncliffe, and poor Mrs. Hird of Leeds. So we all pass away ! I hope you will have a good Conference. We send you Harper—a good man and true—as representative."

The odd pet name given to his daughter in the following letter, was recognised by father and child as a symbol of the peculiar love between them ; and it *was* a peculiar love. On the one side, the tender yearning of a father's heart, exalted by a chivalrous reverence for woman, unconsciously commanded by the maiden. On the other side, an admiration akin to worship, the artless love of a child, a fearlessness that would reprove the impulsive word or act, the thought unworthy of him, and a motherly solicitude by which the strong man was comforted in the time of his pain and sorrow, "as one whom his mother comforteth."

TO HIS DAUGHTER.

"FREDRICKTON, N. BRUNSWICK, *Jan. 26th*, 1868.

"My own dear Tibbie, . . . This is the third letter I have written directly and exclusively for yourself. I suppose it will reach you before you leave London for Liverpool, and tend to cheer you in the voyage, with the assurances (if you need them) of papa's unchanging and tender affection. I hope you will not be very disgusted with this country, as I find John William says he is. You would not think he was, to see him sometimes. . . . He has no cause to be disgusted, unless his noted attachment to Old England renders him insensible to the kindness of friends and the beauty of scenery elsewhere. It shall be my study, darling Fanny, to

make you happy when you come into this New World. You will feel, I daresay, parting from old friends and scenes; but with those you love and who love you near, and with as much civilization as a new unfinished country can furnish, you may manage perhaps to get along pretty well. This is a beautiful place in which we are located—the residence of the Hon. Judge Wilmot, who expects in a few days to be gazetted Governor of New Brunswick. The house is of wood, but beautifully covered with vines, and the grounds are exquisitely laid out and very extensive. . . . How did you enjoy the Handel Festival? I thought of you very much that day. I hope you are keeping your heart with all diligence. In the absence of the means of grace you will get slack and cold unless there be special watchfulness and prayer.”

To E. D—.

“MEADVILLE, PENN., July 30th, 1868.

“I am on my way to New York, to await the arrival of the *Scotia*. And strange to say, I am too agitated and apprehensive to be happy. I don't remember fiercer trials of faith, nor more frequent recurrences of ‘the dark hour,’ than have been my portion during the last month. Happily, in my deepest depression, I have had no misgiving about my duty. . . . Of course, God, Who has led me hitherto, may be better to me than my boding fears, and may take care ‘at once,’ as dear Mr. Arthur said, ‘of me and of His own cause.’ I trust He will. I would fain serve Him yet in the Gospel of His Son. . . . God bless you for all past kindness, and sympathy, and upholding.”

On the 4th of August his family reached New York. He writes, “Thank God, they are here safe, and our four months’ exile is over at last.”

This four months’ exile was but the beginning of what he expected to be a life-long expatriation. The sister of his deceased wife had been for ten years filling a mother’s place to his four motherless children, and by her faithful ministry making his house a home. That such a man should learn to love such a woman need surprise no one; but the law of England forbade him to make her his wife—a statute of the year 1835 declaring marriage with a deceased wife’s sister illegal. He would have submitted to this law, though he considered it unjust, and treated the

ministering angel of his home as his own sister. But this would not satisfy others, for his love was not concealed, and to please them he must either remove her from his home or marry another. A way of escape from such alternatives was unexpectedly opened up. There came from the Methodist Church in Canada, a request that he would become their President and dwell amongst them.

In Canada there were not the same legal objections to his marriage as obtained in England, whilst the sentiment, and usages, and judgment of the country were adverse to the English statute. After long consideration, and full consultation with his brethren in the ministry and his trusted friends, he accepted the call of the Canadian Church. How great the sacrifice was to him may be imagined by those who knew his intense love for his native land, his strong attachment to his personal friends, and his devotion to the Church to which he had given the first years of his strength.

On the 15th of August, in the city of Toronto, Mr. Punshon was married to Miss Vickers. The marriage ceremony was performed by the Rev. Egerton Ryerson, LL.D., the Nestor of Canadian Methodism.

What rest and comfort and happiness were in that home can never be forgotten by those who knew it. Its memory lingers like the memory of summer. Such a home had been the undoing of some men—of men who would have turned its rest into ease, and its comfort into indulgence ; but he never ceased to be “in labours more abundant and in journeyings often.” The comforts and joys of home were not suffered to

hinder, but were made to help him in the Master's service.

TO M. F——.

"CLIFTON HOUSE, NIAGARA, *August 18th, 1868.*

"It struck me you would like to receive a letter with the above heading; and although it is a sultry afternoon, and I feel oppressed with a strange weariness, yet I have roused myself to sit down for the purpose. My wife is by my side, the cataracts roar outside, things of beauty which are joys for ever, images of sublime immensity which awe, while they entrance the soul. . . . You will not have lived perfectly until you have seen Niagara. . . . Fanny Junior comes to-morrow, to stay here till Saturday, and then (D.V.) we take possession of our new home. May it be a happy one. It will be, I trust, a household consecrated to the service and glory of God."

TO THE REV. THOMAS M'CULLAGH.

"NEW YORK, *October 12th, 1868.*

"I have purposed ever since my arrival on these shores to send you a friendly line, but 'work, work, work,' is the *lex vitæ* of a Methodist preacher in either hemisphere, and so I have been 'let hitherto.' When we used to be so near each other in Cumberland, I little thought that the great gulf would separate us, 'but there is a divinity which shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will.' . . . Our good host, Mr. Elliott, had a reception for us on Friday night. . . . Dr. Durbin, Dr. Carey, and a host of New York notables were among the number. Abel Stevens could not come, but was here to dinner yesterday. He is a fine, genial fellow. I enjoyed his society thoroughly. Yesterday afternoon we heard Dr. Tyng, one of the eminent Episcopalian clergymen, and at night went over to Brooklyn to hear Henry Ward Beecher. It was a strange mixture of slang, scholarship, point, and power. . . . We have a nice house in Toronto, and do not lack any comfort, I think, which we had in England, except the occasional sunshine of the countenances of our friends. . . .

"Memory lingers very often on old scenes and friends, and any tidings of them is very grateful. You seem to have had an interesting Conference. What with Thomas Jackson, and Dr. Pusey, and the *Times*, and *Punch*, Methodism is in its silver-slipper state, indeed. Here in Canada it is a great power. The freedom with which it works out here, with no shadow of an established Church to darken it, is amazing. Only think, I lectured the other day in Newbury, a thriving Canadian village of eight hundred inhabitants. There is only one Church, and that the Methodist one. The Episcopalians have a small room which they hire, and in which they have a service once a fortnight!

"The Colonial Office has just sent out a table of precedence for Canada, which has been received with indignation and contempt, for bishops and archbishops are mentioned above privy-councillors, etc. One of the papers has made the country merry by finding out that the senior bishop in the Dominion is good old Bishop Richardson, a one-armed, plain, homely Methodist, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which in Canada is a very fractional part of the population, but as the table does not specify what sort of a bishop, he, of course, will rank above all the rest. Our Canadian preachers are an earnest set of men, and some of them are very superior. . . ."

JOURNAL.

"*December 25th, 1868.*—Through the various and eventful seasons this hallowed day has come, my first away from the old land, but the spirit of the Advent is the same, and the same dear Saviour smiles. Though most of my friends join with 'the herald angels' in my native land, and some have been transferred into their own choir, I must afresh enter into covenant to-day—a covenant which I never subscribed more heartily, for I am oppressed by the great goodness of God. Truly, great as have been my trials, my mercies are greater, and to-day I would humbly record my unwavering determination to be the Lord's."

In all the light and shade of life, the Christmas in his home was joyously and piously spent. *A merry Christmas* and a *holy Christmas* are separated by an impassable gulf to many Christian souls. It was not so to him. From the hour of rapt communion with his God he would come into the fellowship of his home with the dew of tenderness yet in his eyes, and the light of heavenly visions lingering on his face. And he would enter with the lightest heart into all the innocent sport of the home-circle. Yet it was felt by all that the faith, and hope, and love of the devout soul were so blended with the light and joy of the festal hour as to make a music in his life. Such many-sidedness and largeness of soul is not always understood. People who can be solemn only, are scandalized to see a minister of the Gospel in the full enjoyment of social and festive

life, and they say, "Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners." Others, of just as narrow sympathies, say, "Ah! there is the true man, and the seriousness was only professional decorum." The narrow-minded saint and the narrow-minded sinner both say "he hath a devil"—the saint, when the man of God feasts and is merry, and the sinner when he fasts, and weeps, and prays.

As the great Feast of Christ came round year by year, there was in the preacher's home no more youthful and gladsome spirit than his own. For days beforehand he might be seen stealing into the house with hands and pockets full of parcels that were rapidly put under lock and key. What amusing expressions were heard of his own expectations of the good things to come! What sly suggestions of the improbable or impossible presents that he would like! What feigned but alarming approaches to the secrets jealously and lovingly guarded from his eye and thought till the right moment of disclosure should arrive! And when the morning of the holy day at last had come, he would be found in the family circle with the serenity and strength of his manhood all beautiful with a freshness and gentleness like that of childhood. Then came the usual morning kiss, and the added salutation of the day, the story of the Advent read once more with such light and feeling that the Old, Old Story seemed new again, and then the cheerful meal, the anticipation of the Christmas mail from England, or the discussion of the budget just arrived, the prompt despatch of necessary business, the sacred

music and song to occupy the moments till church time. Then, the gladness of the family group as they went up to the house of the Lord, the devout attention, the sympathy and interest of the great preacher when he was a hearer, the kind and grateful notice of the good things in the sermon, and the silence on the weak points, if such there were. After the generous Christmas dinner, with all its merry talk, its memories and hopes, came the long-expected moment for the distribution of presents. The wants of each were anticipated and revealed by his gifts, and it was often found that he had remembered some old wish, forgotten by the one who had uttered it. His own spirit and tact were repeated again in wife and child, and he would find himself, in turn, the subject of a pleasant surprise. The evening is filled with music and singing, reading and recitation, speech and story, till once again the tired, happy household gather for the evening hymn and prayer, and the Christian home is hushed in the quiet of the holy night.

At the Christmas of 1870 the cypress was mingled with the holly. And on the Christmas of 1872 there were clouds of fear and sorrow at strife with the sunshine of their joy. In the one case the recent death of his wife, and in the other the failing health of his only daughter, subdued and chastened every mind. But in neither case was it felt seemly to allow the day to pass without a glad recognition of the good tidings of great joy. There was no dishonest attempt to ignore the dark cloud that hung over the life, but with it all there was a genuine, a grateful, and joyous recognition of the light of Christ

by which the sable cloud of earthly sorrow was made to "turn forth her silver lining on the night."

In the love of friends, as well as of wife and children, and home, and Church, and native land, William Morley Punshon was a man of a great heart. The words of truth and soberness concerning the beauty and strength of his friendships may seem extravagant to those who did not know him intimately; but those who did so know him, cannot but think of his friendship for the late Gervase Smith, and Luke Wiseman, and Bishop Janes, as they think of the love of David and Jonathan. And some are yet living on both sides of the Atlantic, men and women, who mourn for him as the brother beloved, whose like they cannot hope to see again. With mingled fondness and reverence one aged friend is addressed as "papa." Many friends of early years are called by the old familiar names. One is to him a sister, in frank trust and reverent affection such as they alone can know who are filled with the spirit of the same Heavenly Father. Children always had the right of way into his heart. Some called him "papa" as he did his aged friend, and others still speak of him as dear Uncle William.

The red-letter days and the black-letter days of his friends were all noted, and they brought from him kind words and letters as naturally and as constantly as the spring-flowers answer to the sunshine and the rain of the early year. "I like to observe days and seasons," he writes to a young friend, "if thereby I can glint a little sunshine into the hearts of my friends."

This wealth and warmth of heart may not be

understood by all—not even by all of those who have, on other grounds, a genuine admiration for the subject of these memoirs; and some may even think it a weakness in his character. But as wisdom is justified of her children, so let love be justified of hers, and let no one presume to judge in this matter who has never either inspired or been inspired with a love like his.

To E. D—.

“TORONTO, *November 25th*, 1868.

“It does us good always to receive your letters—our best, as well as our dearest thoughts and desires are enkindled. Pray do not cease your ministry. Even when the note is of warning, regarding either intemperance of toil or spiritual ease, it is a welcome word; our hearts often thank God for such a friend. You have made up your mind pretty soon that we are to ‘settle’ on this side. With my usual caution I hesitate to pronounce so early upon the possibilities of the future. Indeed I am living from day to day; and for the first time in my life, I have no golden period within the horizon after which the eye strains and the hope yearns. One thing is certain, I have no narrower sphere of usefulness here than I have ever had. I am apt to tremble sometimes at the responsibility which my position seems to entail.”

TO THE SAME.

“TORONTO, *March 30th*, 1869.

“We have together grieved over your evident weakness and suffering, and hailed any signs of revival and hopefulness which we could gather from your letter, but we know how gently the Father chides those whom He loves, and we have rejoiced in the golden autumn which in spirit has followed upon the burning of summer.

“My dear sister, it does seem to me that your ministry is but beginning; there seems so much for you to do, to cheer the sorrowing and to chide the wayward, to strengthen others’ faith by the lustre of your own,—that we want you to be hale in all the rapture of life, and that your ministry may be fulfilled. I do wish for you to-day the highest good, the deep rare *blessedness*, happier than happiness far.

“I suppose Fanny has told you of our journeying. Did she tell you that at Columbus, Ohio, I preached to the deaf and dumb! And she cried, and I cried as nearly as a man ought. I opened the Senate with prayer one morning at Washington. I wonder when a Methodist Minister will do that in a British House of Commons! I was greatly helped in the

service at the dedication, but the irreverence annoyed me much. . . . I wish you knew the P—ts, I think they would be a comfort to you and you to them. They are so simple and beautifully good, and dear Mrs. O—— is a gem. . . .”

TO THE SAME.

“TORONTO, *Sabbath Afternoon, June 13th, 1869.*

“. . . You cannot think with what a pride I see her winning her gentle way here, as at home, into the hearts of the people, by a thousand quiet ministries, taking without an effort the place they are not slow to accord her. I never could understand the secret of her power, but I begin to find it exerted here, as it used to be. . . . We just want a few of our English friends to look upon us in our Canadian home.

“Well, the Conference is over—one of the best they ever had—the law of kindness in their lips from the beginning to the end. An increase reported of 2,156, one-thirtieth of the entire membership. You have been apprized already that I was re-elected President by a virtually unanimous vote. . . . I think you also received papers with the address to the people on their duties to the ministry, and to the ministers about to be ordained. I have put my whole soul into them. I did in the delivery, and I had almost said my whole life also—for after the Sabbath service I broke down—had one of my old faints intensified, was consumed with considerable fever, and away from the Conference for four days. I was variously exercised during my illness.

“My strong love of life, moreover, agitates and troubles me. I can't decide whether it is right or wrong to cherish it. Yet I dare not doubt. I accept Christ in all the fulness of His offices and work as my surety. I have no other hope, but it is rarely that I have the *glow* of this. Perhaps if I had a more hopeful experience I should have a more useful one. Perhaps not. Who knows? I know this anyhow, that I believe in Jesus, and love Him, and long to love Him more. May He perfect His love in my heart. . . .”

The practical benevolence and private charity of Mr. Punshon were in harmony with his largeness of heart. Of his private charities we may not speak. They were larger than appeared even to his intimate friends, for they were conducted after the teaching of the Love incarnate: “Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.” Whenever in his life such private charities were detected, he stood

abashed before his own good deeds; but it is due to the Church and to the world that mention be made of his hearty and generous support of efforts to bring glory to God and good to men. To these objects he not only devoted the talents that would have gained him place and power, and even rank as a leader and ruler of men; but he returned in his subscriptions to her enterprises, much, if not all of the stipend that the Church allowed him, and as St. Paul lived by his craft so did Mr. Punshon live on the proceeds of his literary labours—labours which at the same time brought a large material as well as moral profit to the Church. In view of this fact his Canadian friends and fellow-workers thought it meet to present him with a purse containing four thousand dollars on the occasion of his return to the mother Church in England. When he heard of this purpose on their part it caused him no little embarrassment. He could not gracefully refuse the gift, but before it was given he had resolved to provide for its return to the Canadian Church at his decease. Too soon, alas! this generous use of the generous gift was made, and the money was returned to the Canadian Fund for the support of superannuated ministers.

We have now to note some features of the work in which Mr. Punshon engaged in America.

One of his first judgments on the peculiar ways of American Methodism was, it will be remembered, a mild condemnation of the policy that spent \$200,000 on a beautiful church in the suburb of Brooklyn instead of in the building of five less expensive churches. He soon realised that the history and

circumstances of the Church in America called for corresponding peculiarities in work and methods, whilst the spirit and aim remained the same as in the old land.

In the early times in Canada, before the establishment of representative government, the influence and prestige of the Episcopalian Church established by Parliament in England, prevailed in the colonies also. Till the year 1798 the clergy of no other Protestant Church had the privilege of solemnizing matrimony. Till 1843 the clergy of the Anglican Church were the sole beneficiaries of the clergy reserve lands—originally one-seventh of the crown lands in the province of Upper Canada (now Ontario)—set apart for the support of the Protestant clergy. Till 1849 the control of the provincial university, then called King's College, was committed to the favoured Church. One after another these privileges, obtained through the partiality of irresponsible rulers, were disallowed by the Canadian Legislature, and perfect religious equality was established. This equality had prevailed so long before Mr. Punshon's arrival in the country that the asperities of the old time had nearly passed away, and a new generation had grown up who could wonder and smile at the social and civil disparity of the different communions in earlier times, the provoking assumption of right to rule on the one side, and on the other, the indignant rejection of the claim. Whatever traces of the old differences had survived were largely forgotten in the hearty admiration and homage rendered by all the Churches to the great Methodist preacher, and this feeling of brotherhood was all the better for the fact that Mr. Punshon

always felt himself to be, and others felt him to be, a Methodist preacher, with a large catholic sympathy but, at the same time, a clear preference of mind and heart for the Church of his choice.

Immediately on his coming to Canada he seemed to get into touch with his brethren, and to throw all his enthusiasm and energy into the onward movement of the Church. One of the first of these movements was the extension of church accommodation and the improvement of church architecture. The early Methodist churches were like the homes of the people, plain and uncomely, as might be expected amongst the first settlers in a new country. To some extent also these buildings gave outward and visible signs of the disabilities under which the Nonconformists of early Canada suffered in common with their brethren in England. The luxuriant growth of a Church endowed and fostered by the State permits only a stunted growth to a struggling Nonconformist Church, and the architecture of the two Churches generally corresponds to the difference of their conditions. The perfect religious equality that had been achieved in Canada, and the great increase in numbers and in wealth of the Methodists and other Nonconformists, had been followed by a corresponding and becoming change in church architecture. The old time distinction between church and chapel became a matter of tradition only, and the importance of each religious body came to be measured by its worth and works and not by any standing given by Act of Parliament.

The change from the comparative shadow in which a Nonconformist lives in England to the perfect

religious equality enjoyed in Canada was a grateful one to Mr. Punshon. He thus speaks of it in his address to the English Wesleyan Methodist Conference at Manchester, where he was representative of the Church in Canada :—

“I do not know whether you will call it an advantage or no, but, in frankly speaking my own mind, I cannot help calling it a great and blessed advantage that Methodism in Canada walks abroad in the sunshine, that she cowers beneath no ancient shadow. She neither frets under legal restrictions nor droops beneath a baleful ascendancy. Oh, it has often been to me a glory and a joy, that the Methodism which I love, my own native and preferred Jerusalem, has there taken the position which she ought always to take among the Churches—standing forth in her comeliness the peer of all, and in her charity the friend of all—too kind to be the enemy, too proud to be the vassal, too affluent in spirit and resources to be the poor relation of any.”

The Methodist Church in Canada holds a foremost place in numbers, wealth, and influence, and at once realised that in her churches, her missions, and her educational work, she should take the place, and do the work, to which Providence had called her.

The chief monument of the church extension and improvement that marked Mr Punshon's time is the Metropolitan Church in the city of Toronto, and so large a part did he take in this enterprise that it is still pointed out as his monument in Canada. It is the largest and most beautiful church in the city, built at a cost of \$180,000. In many other cities and towns, and also in country places, beautiful churches were built—one church at the lowest estimate being dedicated for every Lord's day in the year. To the dedication of many of these churches multitudes were drawn by the charm of the English preacher's eloquence and the spiritual power that attended his word.

The Canadian Conference sought to make the best use of the extraordinary gifts of their President by making him practically a bishop. He was burdened with the care of all the Churches, and therefore he was not embarrassed with any special pastoral charge.

"The diocese," said he, "over which I am called to preside, for my work is Episcopal if my name is not, is one thousand five hundred miles long, by some two hundred to three hundred wide, exclusive of the missionary districts, and it contains within it a population of nearly three millions."

His engagements in this "diocese" often covered every Sunday for months in advance, and many weekdays as well. On his election to the Presidency in 1869, he said :—

"I am thankful further . . . that in a new climate and through the changes of the seasons and the perils of travel, I have been preserved in health and safety, having been privileged to conduct during the year one hundred and seventy public services, and travelling to render them, sixteen thousand miles."

In some respects he may not have acted with a zeal according to knowledge in these excessive labours. When every one of his numerous engagements brought with it the excitement and strain of a special effort, the pressure was more than flesh and blood could bear without distress and hurt. The hearers who wondered at the brilliancy and power of the preacher, could not well imagine the agony of spirit in which he sometimes approached the pulpit, or the suffering and exhaustion that frequently came on after the labour was accomplished. It is a question whether we do not sometimes bring on needlessly and culpably those sad results that leave us in a pious maze at the way in which "God buries His workmen, and carries on His work." It is a question to be well pondered by those to whom God has entrusted the

high gifts of oratory, whether brain and heart should not have periods of complete rest to justify engagements of extraordinary excitement and exhaustion. Our great barristers and statesmen find such periods of rest between the sessions of courts and parliaments, but our great preachers too often find rest in the grave when they should still be serving the Church in the prime of their powers.

In these pages it will be seen how Mr. Punshon's work appeared to him, amid what difficulties it was carried on, and in what earnestness and humility.

JOURNAL.

"*February 9th*, 1869.—One month of the new year has gone, bearing, I fear me, a record of short-coming away with it. I have been incessant in labours, but not of the most spiritual kind. I feel the lack of settled work, and a direct pastoral charge. It is easier to be spiritually minded when the whole heart and life are engaged in direct soul work with others. The heart moreover needs that exercise which a pastor's sympathy brings in its train. Many signs of good in the Connexion over which I preside. The ministry is a devoted one, and the people expect blessing.

"Dear C. M—— converted, partly through my instrumentality. The Lord keep the dear child steadfast to the end.

"*March 14th*, 1869.—Returned yesterday from a three weeks' tour into the States, during which I have preached in Washington and New York, and lectured in Columbus and Baltimore, Washington and Albany. Grateful for the goodness of God in preserving us through many journeyings and some peril. Have been privileged to speak for Christ, and with some power I would that I could always feel the kindling of His love. Death is very busy among my friends at home. . . . Life seems very short, and to look back on my work in it is but an unsatisfactory retrospect. Oh for more direct power over the souls and consciences of men.

"*November 21st*, 1869.—. . . A smart attack of illness yesterday, and a half hour of thorough physical wretchedness before preaching this morning. . . . Am often tempted to think that it cannot be God's will that I should continue to preach when it is attended with so much suffering, suffering which concentrates on self the thought which ought to be given to earnestness or breathed in prayer, and which cannot fail, as it would seem, to be hurtful to the usefulness of my message, but the Lord sustains me in the actual work when once the tremor has passed.

TO THE REV. THOMAS M'CULLAGH.

"TORONTO, *January 14th*, 1870.

"I have been long purposing to write to you, but have been 'let hitherto,' for I have never seemed to have so much to do in my life as I have had lately, and in the near future I can see no cessation nor rest. The preaching and lecturing work I can manage pretty well, but the 'care of all the Churches' is a grievous burden. There are but few statesmen in this Conference, and a wonderful lot of lawyers, and disputes are continually arising upon small technicalities, and sometimes important matters on which the Book of Discipline is silent, which *tire* my soul. The President here is at once possessed of more and of less power than at home. His responsibility is greater during the year, but he is more liable to be overhauled at the end of it. However, if I can earn the peace-maker's blessing, or guide the old vessel safely through the shallows, I am content.

"To-day we are in the midst of a snowstorm which realises the old traditional Canadian winters, and are shivering even through our double windows. We have just lost one of our ablest ministers. He died of heart disease on Christmas Day. He was a student at Richmond, contemporary with Bush and the men of his year. James H. Bishop will not soon be forgotten in Canada. He was a ripe theologian, and a punctual, faithful Methodist preacher. Nearly every mail from home brings us the news of some break in the ranks of our friends. We have been greatly distressed by the news of the death of Mrs. J. W. Hall, jun., of Bristol. I married her on June 21st, 1866, and after three short years of married life she has passed away. Well, if the life is to purpose, and of faith, it matters not, though I am not insensible to the loss of being cut off in the midst of the days. I often think my love of life is morbid. But He who is the master of the human heart can loosen the fastest love. . . ."

TO MRS. T. F. C. M.—.

"TORONTO, *February 3rd*, 1870.

"We are now in mid-winter, and it is pretty cold to-day. I drove seven and a half miles this morning, with the thermometer below zero, and have since been out twice in our own sleigh. . . . The two Fannies drove fifty-six miles in two days with me in a sleigh last week but one. I went up to Orillia on Lake Couchiching . . . to dedicate a church. The drive was rather long, but on the whole I think they enjoyed it. The week before that I drove from Guelph to Fergus, thirteen and a half miles in the teeth of a fierce wind which almost skinned me—dedicated a church in the afternoon, attended a crowded tea-meeting in the evening, and started at 9.15 p.m. for the thirteen and a half miles drive back. The thermometer six below zero, our breath congealing on our rugs and wrappers, the black and brown horses with which we started a well matched *white* pair before

we reached our journey's end ; the snow crackling beneath our horses' feet, the brilliant moon walking in mid-heaven like a lonely queen, and making all the night radiant as the day. I don't think I ever enjoyed a ride more in my life. . . ."

The following extract from another letter describes a midsummer night in Canada, and may well come in here after the midwinter night described above, and it should be borne in mind, especially by English readers, that the second is as truly Canadian as the first :—

"This sultry sun has burnt out of me all the puny intellectual brilliance that I ever had, and I do nothing but languish through the days, attending committees and such small work, playing croquet in the cool of the evening, driving Fanny out now and then to pay some required visits, occasionally trying to fasten my mind to some laborious process but failing lamentably, and feeling it an effort to meditate at all, much less to grasp the invisible, and make my own its realities of comfort and wonder. I am thankful I was not born a Creole, not from any foolish prejudice of colour, but because I feel how difficult it is to be *a man*, serving God and working for Jesus, in *hot weather*. . . . Did you ever know what it is to sleep with two windows wide open, and a thin sheet as the only covering, and get up for a promenade in the night, looking out on the landscape while the air does not even flutter a leaf, and the sun seems to breathe in his brief slumbers as hotly as in his lusty march through the upper heavens? This summer has tried me much every way. In the midst of it we do a little. I preached on Sabbath evening and administered the Sacrament (amidst precious grace) to the people. . . ."

JOURNAL.

"*February 20th, 1870.*—Touched profoundly during the week by the memoirs of dear A. H—— which S—— has written. What a wonderful revelation of God and heaven they must have had in that sick chamber. The gates were indeed ajar. In life she was timid and reserved, though always reverent and trustful. How suggestive her experience in dying, 'I don't need to cling to Jesus—He clings to me.' Heard of a drunkard reclaimed by a few words of mine in the noon prayer-meeting in Chicago a year ago. How humbling to think that the seed scattered by the wayside has borne fruit which has yet to appear in the furrows. . . ."

"*June 26th, 1870.*—Through infinite mercy spared during another Conference, which passed off pleasantly and profitably. The means of grace in the public services were especially refreshing. Delegates from other

Churches furnished kindly episodes. The American representatives enjoyed themselves and profited us, and my dear old friend, Gervase Smith, brought safely over the ocean by God's goodness, delighted the brethren exceedingly. The Conference was in fine temper. Scarcely a word to be regretted from any one. An increase of 2,088, *laus Deo*. Since the Conference closed I have been wandering with my friend, Mr. Smith, whose society is as cold water to a thirsty soul. Some lethargy of spirit over me—perhaps nature's recoil from a prolonged strain—perhaps lassitude arising from prostration of body. . . .”

TO THE REV. WILLIAM HIRST.

“CINCINNATI, *March 6th*, 1870.

“It is refreshing and delightful to me to be assured of your changeless love, for I never was more covetous of it, and time does not deaden the feeling of old attachment, nor distance cause the dear images of friends to fade.

“This is the blessed Sabbath, and I have just been preaching the word of life, and am thankful though humbled sorely. Oh, how different I am from what I ought to be, and from what people think me to be. I do not think I am a hypocrite; but I get so much clearer insight into truth, and into the harmony of Scripture and its wondrous beauty and power than I can possibly exhibit in my life, that I mourn and go softly, and can only long from the far depths to stand upon the crest by and by. Pray for me, my dear old friend; I don't often let my friends into my heart. I wish I could sometimes lift the veil, but it is very often *naked* faith with me, and I would fain have, if the Lord will, some clothing of comfort and joy. I have been foolish enough to think that the joyous experience of some is withheld from me to keep me humble, lest I should be exalted above measure. Anyhow, this is one of the collateral results of it. But enough; I have shown you one or two of my soul problems, that I may have your prayers. I need them, prize them, covet them. Pray, my dear friend, that I may ‘live more nearly as I pray’ and preach, that I may tread warily in slippery places, and hold myself as a child of God without rebuke, and that it may please God to favour me with a fearless experience and an end of triumph at last.”

Another movement in which Mr. Punshon took great interest was that of the Union of the different branches of the Methodist Church. In the readjustment of relations with the parent Church in England, it was of great advantage that one so familiar with English Methodism and so influential in her councils

should be at the head of the Canadian Church. It was not till the year 1874, the year after Mr. Punshon's departure from Canada, that the first Union took effect, but he was actively concerned in the previous negotiations which led to that Union. The Union of 1874 was of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference of Canada, the Wesleyan New Connexion Conference, and the Wesleyan Conference of Eastern British America. This was followed in the year 1883 by a further Union of the Methodist Church of Canada, the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada, the Bible Christian Church, and the Primitive Methodist Church. Thus was founded the present Canadian Methodist Church, into which all the Methodists of British America are gathered in one National Methodist Church of ten Conferences, 1,628 ministers, and a spiritual charge of some 800,000 souls, the largest Protestant Church in the Dominion.

The mission to Japan, established by the Methodist Church of Canada, was due mainly to the interest and exertions of Mr. Punshon. In this enterprise he was in advance of some Canadians. The Dominion of Canada, stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the St. Lawrence to the North Pole—literally a “dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth”—this land with all its various peoples, English, French, and aborigines, and immigrants from all the countries of Europe, gave scope enough, some thought, for missionary effort, but others gave a cordial support to the project of Mr. Punshon to do no less but rather more for our missions in the Dominion, and at the same time send some messenger of salvation to the nations

beyond, and to the millions of Japan. The larger enterprise prevailed, and the members of the Methodist Church gave, and still give, their hearty support to the Japan mission, and encourage a zeal that dares to cross an ocean as well as a continent, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.

We give here an example of his pleading for foreign missions. It will clearly show his own attitude towards that work, and it will further be of interest, as an illustration of his earnestness in the Master's service, at the very time when he was in the agony of domestic bereavement, his nights of weeping being followed by days of toil.

"It is high time that Canadian Methodism was represented in the foreign field. As Manitoba has become a Canadian province, and British Columbia will be one shortly, we shall soon be without any foreign mission. It would be a reproach if we should long remain without one. There is room in China, in Japan, in Italy, where the chains of centuries are being broken—in Palestine, the land of that ancient race whose children have so many claims upon us—there is room in Spain, over whose long night the morn of light and liberty is breaking. Such an enterprise would quicken the energy and develop the liberality of the Church." . . .

"God takes care at some time or other to let developing circumstances touch every human life. Circumstances apparently dark and discouraging may be charged with the grandest purpose, as the darkest cloud with the most brilliant flashes of lightning. . . . The greatest cause of apprehension to the missionary enterprise is not opposition, but indifference. This is the chief source of peril and failure. If Laodicea be the type of the Churches, no wonder the world sneers and perishes. If our religion be clad in silken sheen, a patronised and fashionable thing—a sort of armorial bearing for which men pay small duty either to God or man—is it any wonder that men are heedless, or fall into the drowsy monotony in which the messengers dream away their lives? The poison-trees in the field are but little harmful. They are uprooted as soon as they are found out. The barren trees which cumber the ground and mock the delusive hope of the husbandman are the curses of the vineyard and the field.

"But if we are idlers we shall be the only idlers in the universe. Everything around us rebukes our lukewarm and traditional piety.

Nature is in earnest. Pagans are self-devoting. Mohammedanism has resolute and valiant sons. Popery compasses sea and land to make her proselytes. Infidels walk warily and constantly, scattering the seeds of unbelief. Society is in earnest. The sons of enterprise do not slumber. Warriors hail the clarion and rush eagerly to the war. Students consume the oil of the lamp and the oil of life together. Mammon's votaries are not the laggards in the streets. All these forces are lashed into unwonted activity, and while we (God forgive us!), with the noblest work to do, and with the most royal facilities for doing it—with the obligation of duty, and gratitude, and brotherhood, and God's command—with the vows of discipleship upon us, with death at our doors and in our homes, and the sad wail of the perishing multitudes sounding in our ears, 'No one hath cared for my soul,'—are heedless, indifferent, exclusive, and most of all, as satisfied with our scanty efforts, as if no heathen were in peril, and as if no Christ had died."

In yet another department of Church work Mr. Punshon rendered timely and valuable service, viz. in the increased endowment of Victoria College. In the early days of irresponsible government, known in Canada as the time of the Family Compact, the control of the Provincial University had been given to the Episcopalian Church. Rather than submit to this, the Methodists and Presbyterians founded independent universities under royal charter. These schools were free from all sectarian tests. The Methodist school was founded in 1832 at Cobourg, under the name of Upper Canada Academy, and in the year 1841 it obtained university power under the name of Victoria College. In 1849 the Provincial University, King's College, passed from the control of the Episcopalians and was changed into a purely secular institution under the name of the University of Toronto. In the meantime Victoria College and Queen's College had won an important place in the country. Moreover, the purely secular character of the reorganised Provincial University was only less

objectionable than was the sectarian character of the school in its early form. The Methodists and Presbyterians continued therefore to support the colleges they had founded, and their voluntary efforts were supplemented by annual grants from the Legislature. In 1868 these grants were suddenly withdrawn; but the result was far from what may have been expected and intended—the crippling of the denominational colleges. Additional endowments were raised by Methodists and Presbyterians. Into this movement Mr. Punshon threw himself with great earnestness, and in a short time endowments were secured which more than made up for the loss of the grants from the provincial treasury.

Victoria University is also indebted to Mr. Punshon for his interest in the establishment of a theological faculty, the first chair of which was endowed by the late Edward Jackson, of Hamilton. His advocacy was also given to the establishment in the city of Montreal of the Wesleyan Theological College, to be affiliated to Victoria University.

This review of Mr. Punshon's work in Canada may close with the following conversation between Sir William M'Arthur of London, and Mr. John Macdonald of Toronto—two worthy sons of the Methodist Church.

Sir William. “Well, what did Mr. Punshon do for you when he was out here” [in Canada].

Mr. Macdonald. “Do for us? Why he pushed us on half a century.”

There may be something of poetry in these expressive and generous words, but they honour the speaker as well as the man of whom he was speaking, and

they fairly represent the grateful recollections of the Methodist Church of Canada.

Whether Dr. Punshon chiefly excelled as preacher or as lecturer, has been matter of dispute, and there may well be difference of opinion on the point. Moreover, he never ceased to be a preacher, calling men to higher thinking and nobler living, and his hearers never failed to realise that his aim was not rhetoric but righteousness. Besides this general tendency of his lecturing, there was a special help-giving to Christian charity and unity by his lectures, in that they brought together people of all the Churches and of no Church in the common worship of the true, the beautiful, and the good. People whose duties or whose prejudices would not allow them to attend the Methodist Church on Sunday might often be found on the Monday with one accord in one place—bishop and priest, presbyter and pastor, believer and unbeliever—all under the spell of the Methodist preacher. Attracted at first by the brilliancy of his imagination and the charm and force of his utterance, they were kindled sooner or later by the quickening warmth of his devotion to God and to the right. Men who look into each other's faces as they break bread together at such a spiritual feast can hardly know again the bitterness of enmity they may have felt before.

A stranger walking along the Strand some years ago saw the people streaming into Exeter Hall. He asked a young man who stood by, what was the occasion of the gathering, and for answer was referred to a bill which announced that the Rev. William Morley Punshon was that day to deliver a lecture in

Exeter Hall. The stranger's reflections found utterance in the irreverent words, "*It is only one of those d—d Methodist preachers.*" He acted, however, on the suggestion of the young man, and they both went in to hear what the babbler had to say. The lecturer at once arrested the stranger's attention. Very soon the subject became interesting, and then exciting, and at last the man who had entered the Hall with words of contempt on his lips was seen to vie with the most enthusiastic in applause. From time to time his young companion interrupted his demonstrations by quoting the words with which he had entered the building. On leaving the Hall the gentleman thanked the young man for directions and corrections received, frankly acknowledged the grossness and ignorance of his first misjudgment, and expressed the purpose of hearing more of the Methodist preachers for the future. The young man, who was the son—and at that time the wayward son—of a Methodist preacher, is now a prominent minister in the Canadian Conference. This extreme case represents a widespread work of conciliation accomplished by Dr. Punshon. Such work is accomplished by the good men of all parties in touching the deeper, better nature that makes the whole world kin, and raises men above the national, social, and sectarian conceits that are so dear to intense but narrow minds.

It may interest some readers to hear how the New World appreciated the Old World preacher and orator. At the risk, therefore, of some little repetition, the following quotations are made from Canadian and American journals that represent the voice of the

people. These criticisms are none the less valuable because they note the limitations as well as the excellencies of the speaker.

“His voice is very fine. If you observe closely, it is a little husky, yet for all that remarkably pleasant. The thing that strikes you first in his speaking is his enunciation; you never heard it excelled. It is beautiful; you scarcely lose a syllable of a whole lecture. Every word is finished before another is touched. Every minutest sound is as clear cut as if it were uttered alone. And yet there is no appearance of effort to make it so. Each syllable is a distinct silvery drop, and yet the whole is a stream, smooth-flowing, unbroken.

“The next thing that strikes you is the close linking of sentence with sentence, and thought with thought. There is no fragment. Every part is a link. The whole is a chain, and a chain of wondrous beauty. It seems to you as if no other possible sentence could join itself with the preceding one as perfectly as that chosen, and that no thought could possibly be changed in position or form, or have another substituted for it without loss. There is vast difference in orators in this respect. Some oratory is beautiful, powerful, but fragmentary in its make up, concrete, conglomerate. Mr. Punshon's, at least as far as its word and sentence structure is concerned, is not so. An oration of his is an organism (to repeat a figure already used), a chain, or best of all a stream. The first word he utters is the beginning of a current. Every succeeding word augments that current. Before you are aware he has drawn you in; and, once in, there is no stop for you until the orator stops. Here is Mr. Punshon's power. It is a subtle power, an unaccountable power, but it is very great. Many orators are profounder than Punshon; many more edifying, many more startling, many more powerful in moving the deeper feelings of one's nature, many richer in wit and humour, many nearly or quite as fertile even in beautiful illustrations, and flashing figures, and brilliant passages; but no one before the English-speaking world of to-day can stand up in the presence of an audience and so easily, so entirely without the appearance of an effort, launch them upon a strain of eloquence, at once so quiet and yet so varied, so rapid, so absolutely enchanting. . . . All is change, all is movement, but all is harmony. There is no delay. On, on we are borne, without time even to take breath. No sooner does the curtain fall upon one scene than it rises upon another. Or more accurately, the curtain never falls at all; for the whole oration is a constantly moving panorama or a series of dissolving views—each picture melting marvellously but beautifully into its successor. . . .

“One of the most remarkable things in the orations of Mr. Punshon is the great number and variety of his quotations. Nor are they mere

externals added for tawdry ornament. They are polished stones wrought into the mosaic of the structure itself. All literature has seemingly been laid under tribute to produce them,—ancient and modern, English and Continental, prose and poetry. If nowhere does the breadth and richness of the orator's culture appear more plainly than here, neither does his genius shine out anywhere more conspicuously. Nothing is more difficult than to use quotations well. In nothing is it more easy or more common to bungle. None but a master workman is fit to attempt mosaics, but Dr. Punshon is a master workman, and here if nowhere else he proves it."

The lecture on the *Men of the Mayflower*, prepared in America, illustrates very well the style and the aim of Dr. Punshon. It was not his object to discover new facts concerning the Pilgrim Fathers. He did not seek to bring together the dry bones of the past; but, that being done by the historian and antiquarian, he breathed upon the dry bones, and they became living men,—living with such intensity of life as to quicken the pulse, and fire the heart, and strengthen the will of the men of to-day. As the skill of the modern surgeon sometimes restores the ebbing life of a sick man by filling his veins with the warm rich blood transfused from a man in health and vigour, so by the magic of his art did the lecturer and moralist transfuse the strong pure currents of spiritual life and energy from the *Men of the Mayflower* into weaker souls, making them strong to do and dare for God and for the right. Accordingly an American critic writes in a New York paper:—

"Can a man say anything new about the Puritan settlers of New England? This question we should readily answer in the negative had we not heard the lecture of last evening. The theme is perfectly familiar, its smallest details have been forced upon our attention from childhood, and it would seem impossible for a speaker, no matter how gifted, to interest an audience in the subject. In saying that Dr. Punshon did this, we certainly award him great praise. But the lecturer did

more than interest, he excited a glow of enthusiasm, aroused every feeling of pity, admiration, and regard for the Pilgrim Fathers, whose history was sketched with a descriptive power nothing short of wonderful. He has a voice powerful and flexible. When fairly launched upon his subject, he forces his way ahead with resistless power, and almost compels you to listen, even when the events narrated are older than a thrice-told tale. His figurative language is bold and strong always, and at times original. His forte is the portraiture of character, and conscious of his ability in this direction he introduces descriptions of men often, and never without effect."

In addition to these observations, a further peculiarity of Dr. Punshon's eloquence may be noted, viz., its extraordinary power to move *men*. It was often seen that whilst the countenances of the women expressed a genuine, but for the most part, only a placid admiration, the men were so intensely moved that they could not refrain from shouting and from tears. Was it because the speaker was himself one of the most manly of men, and that his presentation of the religion of the Son of man gave some new emphasis to the masculine virtues of truthfulness and honour, of courage and generosity, as well as to the more feminine graces of patience, and pity, and sympathy, and love?

CHAPTER XIII.

1870—1871.

CANADA. Aged 46, 47.

Death of Mrs. Punshon.—Journal.—Letters.—Travels.—Journey to the Far West.—Salt Lake City.—Mormonism.—California.—Vancouver Island.—Yo Semite Valley.

In the midst of the labours and successes of his public life, and of unbroken domestic happiness, his home was suddenly bereft and darkened by an overwhelming calamity. On September 23rd, 1870, Mrs. Punshon died, after an illness of only a few hours.

JOURNAL.

"*September 24th, 1870.*—How shall I set down the awful experience of a week which has changed the whole aspect of the future? I am bereft. . . . I am bereft . . . stricken from the height of happiness and hope to the depth of a darkness which only God can enlighten, which only God can enable me to bear. . . . The desire of mine eyes is taken away at a stroke. Oh, my God, my God, I believe that in faithfulness Thou hast afflicted me . . . but, the sense of loneliness and sorrow! I grieve, I wonder, but I do not rebel. . . .

"The friends are all very kind, and seem to feel the dear one's removal as an individual loss, for such was her sweetness of manner and unpretentious goodness, that she was loved wherever she was known. . . . I can say under the stroke, 'It is the Lord,' and there I rest, I must wait for more grace to get further. 'Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me, O Lord!' but they are *Thy* waves, and I must lie and let them sweep—waiting till Thou shalt tell me, in the fulness of a clearer vision, *why* they sweep over me. . . ."

"*September 26th, 1870.*—Yesterday the 'bonnie dust' was committed to the crypt in the Necropolis, amidst gazing thousands—as large a private funeral as has ever been seen in Toronto. Testimonies of respect, sympathy, condolence, strong love for the departed, and lasting good effected by her example, crowd upon me. Had a remarkable approach to God in prayer, whilst struggling hard for submission and trust, just before the funeral. That still hour was one of unutterable peace. Some pangs of terrible loneliness to-day, but keeping hold of God. He holds me up. Had a telegram from dear Gervase, in answer to our message on Sunday morning. . . ."

"*October 2nd, 1870.*—I am a marvel to myself, but the grace of God is all powerful. I have been saved in my deep distress from the shadow of a rebellious thought, and have had a more realising faith than for long before. . . ."

"*October 15th, 1870.*—I have this day committed my precious dust to the God's acre, where it shall await 'the adoption.' Very beautiful was the landscape to-day, gorgeous, and full of hope, the dying trees in their robes of scarlet and gold. It was impossible for it to be *all* hopelessness and sorrow. . . ."

"On October 3rd I went down to Cobourg for a little change of scene. Last Sunday I was strengthened to resume work, and preached at Port Hope, lecturing on Monday evening, and presiding at the Missionary Committee for three following days—days of toil, and nights of weeping. Almost overthrown in the midst of it by the reception of my first English letters since my calamity. To the praise of the Divine glory I state that I have not yet rebelled—though unutterably lonely and sad, I will, can, do praise God through it all. . . ."

"*November 12th, 1870.*—The wherefore of the great mystery just as dark as ever, and, perhaps, as it will always remain *in time*, but my God strengthens me for work and worship through it all. A hard week through the back woods—over dreadful roads, and in inhospitable weather, but work is my diversion from a brooding which might become anguish."

LETTER TO E. D——.

"*November 25th, 1870.*

"My days are filled with honest work, and incessant, fatiguing travel; a heaving of the heart as it turns homeward; a pretty constant trust in God; a restless longing for a sight of friends at home; a mourning over inactive or uncompleted things which yet I find no time to do; a doxology for family mercies yet remaining; a wonder what I shall do when the blithe child, my eldest, sanctified by this sorrow into a very woman of truth and purity, goes off to another's home; a yearning over my sons . . . an intense desire that not a shred of the intended benefit of this great sorrow may be lost out of my own heart; a more sympathetic

remembrance of other afflicted ones ; a sense of flagging power and failing strength which warns me that the struggle is an unequal one, and that I must soon stop and rest, or be in the grasp of the old giant, who, four years ago, locked me up in his dungeon, with shattered nerves and super-sensitive brain."

JOURNAL.

"*December 24th, 1870.*—The approach of Christmas, usually such a joyous season in our home, has brought vividly before me my loss. I am striving, however, to be unselfish through it all, that in the sight of others 'My darkened ways may fill with music all the same.' . . ."

The following tribute to the memory of the one he mourned, appeared in the *Toronto Christian Guardian*. It is written by a friendly, but not a flattering hand :—

"It is with unspeakable sorrow that we announce the sudden death on last Friday afternoon, of one so widely known and warmly esteemed as Mrs. Punshon, the beloved wife of the honoured President of our Conference. Seldom has the announcement of any death startled and shocked a wider circle of admiring friends or awakened more general emotions of profound sorrow and regret. . . .

"A little more than two years ago she came to Canada, a stranger to us all. In that short period, few have ever won a wider circle of attached friends. In this city and throughout the country there is many a family over which her death will throw a deep shadow, and be felt as that of a near friend. Her kindly interest in the welfare of others, her sunny and cheerful disposition, her earnest sympathy with every good work, and her Christian simplicity and frankness of spirit, secured for her the loving admiration of all who had the privilege of her acquaintance. Nothing has been more remarkable in her character during her residence among us, than the warm and earnest practical interest she took in every good enterprise, whether in her own Church or out of it. Coming as a stranger to Canada, severing the ties which bound her to the old land and its interests, it would not have been strange if she had found it difficult to feel the same interest in our Canadian affairs, that she had felt in the land where her whole previous life had been spent. But she seemed at once to give a place in her sympathy to every undertaking that had for its object the welfare of man and the glory of God. . . . In the meridian of her womanly strength and beauty, in the midst of her Christian influence, happy in the love of her husband and family, every outward circumstance bright with promise for the future, and just as her happy life

seemed about to be crowned with the richer joy of motherhood, Death laid his cold hand upon her beating heart, and it is stilled for ever. Her cheerful smile can no more carry sunshine into the circles where she was welcomed. Her willing hand has lost its cunning to relieve the needy and suffering. Her earnest example can now only stimulate by being remembered. 'Her sun has gone down while it is yet day.'

Mr. Punshon's taste for travel was abundantly gratified in the discharge of his duties as President of the Canadian Conference, visiting, as he did, all parts of Canada, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. And further, in response to calls from the Churches and invitations to lecture, he saw the great cities of the United States, and became familiar with that vast country, from Maine to California, and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. In his journeyings he was everywhere recognised by old English friends, a fact that illustrates the wide and rapid diffusion of the British race in our day. In the remote settlements of Canada, in the crowded thoroughfares of New York and New Orleans, on the slopes of the Pacific, and in the wild North-west, everywhere he was greeted with joy by men and women who knew him in the Old Land, or, as they say in America, "AT HOME." Many had heard him preach and lecture, others had been members of his Bible-classes, some he had married, and others had been in the service of his family. An old school-mate is found in a professor in a Canadian University, and in the wife of a well-to-do Canadian farmer he discovers again the faithful attendant who had taught him his letters and had closed his mother's eyes in death. In Cincinnati he meets with *American cousins* bearing his own name.

With the help of extracts from letters and journals

we may follow him on some of his journeys, look with his eyes on men and things in the New World, and learn how he was influenced or, to use his own word, *educated*, by what he saw.

TO M. F——.

“DETROIT, MICH., U.S., *January 25th*, 1869.

“This is a city of about eighty thousand inhabitants, just across the border from Canada. I lectured on Friday and preached yesterday in one of the most beautiful Methodist churches in the world. They certainly know how to build on this side the water. I suppose I must have had two thousand two hundred people yesterday morning. We travelled from Hamilton to Chicago, nearly five hundred miles, in a hotel car. We were in it from half-past two on Monday to ten on Tuesday morning. We had a state-room, with crimson velvet sofa and arm-chairs, lamps and candles to read by, bed to sleep on at night, dinner and tea served and cooked well, at command. . . . On the last Sabbath in February (p.v.) I am to assist in the dedication of the new Metropolitan Church in Washington. I am to lecture at Columbus, Ohio, twice at Baltimore, in Maryland; and in the capital on the following Tuesday General Grant is to be inaugurated President of the United States, so we hope to witness the ceremony. To-night I am to be in Windsor, Wednesday in Tarnier, Friday in Toronto, lecturing for the Boys' Home. I have work enough, and a little too much, but this is the time for it.”

TO THE “METHODIST RECORDER.”

“Your exchanges will have informed you of the proceedings at the dedication of the new Metropolitan Church, of which the President and the Chief Justice are trustees. It is a beautiful building, a worthy representative of Methodism in the legislative capital of the country. Dr. Newman, the newly appointed pastor, has just been elected chaplain to the Senate. The keystone to the arch over the pulpit is from Solomon's Temple, the panels of the pulpit are of wood from the Garden of Gethsemane, the caps of the posts from the Mount of Olives, etc. Some iconoclasts have risen up in anger against these, as if they tended to superstition or to popery. Sooth to say, the danger in America does not lie in this direction at all. Phrenologically speaking, the American has a finely developed head, but I have sometimes thought that where the organ of veneration should be there must be a perfect hollow. There is an infinitesimal reverence for sacred places, days, and things. I have seen the hat worn almost up to the altar, the newspaper read during the sermon, the reporter writing his leading article during the minister's

prayer. I should rather welcome than rebuke anything that would have a tendency to increase the national reverence. . . . Time-honoured, moreover, as the American practice of raising money for the Churches on the Sabbath has become, and great as may have been its success, I should like to see it buried in 'the tomb of the Capulets,' and I should feel as I followed its funeral that a sworn foe to the higher interests of the Churches lay there interred. We spent eight hours in the Metropolitan Church on the day of dedication ; five in the house of God, and three in the house of merchandise, that is five hours were spent in worship, and three in raising money. Bishop Simpson's was an enrapturing sermon ; Dr. Eddy's was a masterly argument for the truth, pressed home by a searching application at the close ; but in ten minutes the effect of both was marred to me by the earnest, humorous, sarcastic, pertinacious appeals for money. Still this is but a spot upon the sun ; and through this boundless continent the sun of Methodism does shine with a steady radiance which gives every prospect that it will brighten and broaden into noon."

TO THE REV. THOS. M'CULLAGH.

"TORONTO, *March 30th*, 1869.

" . . . We are just now in our hideous transition state between winter and spring. The thaw has sent the frost flying, and the snow is melting so rapidly that the freshets in the rivers are sources of considerable danger. Last week I rode eighty miles in a sleigh up to Owen Sound on the Georgian Bay, which is a hollow arm of Lake Huron, and my face was almost blistered by the combined influence of keen wind and fierce sun. . . . I have had a busy and happy winter of it, working incessantly. The *Recorder* letter will have told, ere this comes to hand, something of our recent visit to the legislative capital of the States. I enjoyed it immensely, and have increased my stock of knowledge of American habits and tendencies by the journey. They are a wonderful people and worth a long study. I never saw so much irreverence mixed with so much devotion as at the dedication of the Metropolitan Church in Washington. Grant, Colfax, Chief Justice Chase, and a host of Senators and Congressmen were present at the opening service. . . . There is a mighty field for a man to work in the States. The congregations are impressive and intelligent, and the Methodists, being the leading Church in the States, have great influence. I have had offers from Chicago, Cincinnati, and a very tempting one from New York—but I am heart-whole yet, and if my connection with British Methodism is to be severed, it shall not be by my hands. I hope we shall have a good increase this year. Our preachers are devoted men, some of them capital preachers (we want giants, however), all of them trained to expect a present blessing. Hence there have been many revivals. . . . It was a pleasure to

me to be present in Washington on Inauguration Day. On the day previous the two Fannies and I had an interview with General Grant at his headquarters. . . . Altogether, my visit let me into the inner life of politics in America as I had not seen it before. . . .”

Mr. Punshon's most extensive journey in America was that to the Pacific coast, in the spring of 1871. He went out to visit the missions established by the Canadian Church, lecturing on the way to meet expenses of his journey, and to secure a sum of money for a private charity to which his heart was drawn. In prospect of the journey he writes, “It seems an arduous journey, and I shrink from it; but it is my duty, and may be, in retrospect, a very high pleasure.” And in the retrospect, he says in addressing the Conference—

“I trust that my visit to the Far West has not been without some benefit to the Church, whose messenger I have been. It will be my own fault and because I am slow of heart to receive impressions of improvement, if I have not returned from it a wiser and a better man. I feel a more wholesome love of the gospel, for I have seen the monstrous evils which arise from the perverted moral sense of those who have grafted strange doctrines upon it. I have learnt to prize more highly than ever the blessings of our holy Christianity, having had personal observation of both refined and rude paganisms as they are. I have a firmer faith than ever in the old, old gospel, and in the missionary work of the Churches, because that in the midst of paganism in its most besotted and unworthy forms, I have seen those whom it has rescued and saved.”

TO HIS DAUGHTER.

“OMAHA, NEB., *March 23rd*, 1871.

“My own dear child,—Many thanks for the thoughtfulness which prompted the sending of the telegram. It reached us after we were seated in the train at Chicago, and rejoiced us greatly. We had a pleasant journey all day yesterday; very cold while we were crossing the Mississippi river; saw clouds of blackbirds, some prairie hens, a hawk, snow-birds, and a prairie on fire. . . . We have just crossed the Missouri river, and are at this wonderful place, with 14,000 inhabitants where, a while ago,

there was hardly anything but desert. The Missouri is a poor, miserable, yellow-looking stream here. . . . The sight of the prairies of Iowa is something wonderful, but becomes tiresome after a while. It is like being at sea. . . .”

TO THE SAME.

“THE GREAT PRAIRIE, ANTELOPE STATION, *Friday Morning*.

“We have so far had a very pleasant journey, my dearest child, and at an elevation of 4,000 feet, 954 miles from Chicago, I will write a line in hope that the train which we expect to meet at Cheyenne may speed it sooner to you than if I waited until we had a resting-place more stable. . . . I suppose the journey would by some people be deemed monotonous, but to us it comes with the freshness of a host of new sensations. The Illinois and Iowa prairies are nothing to these Nebraska ones. I never realised on those the idea of an ocean, but it is impossible here to avoid the thought that you are at sea. We have travelled for two hundred miles, I may say with truth, without the sight of a tree!—and the sensation of vastness and sublimity presented by the boundlessness of the open plain cannot be surpassed of its kind. . . . We have seen all the things proper to be seen—prairie dogs, funny little fellows, prairie hens, hawks, herds of antelopes, one of them so close to the train that it could have been shot. . . .”

TO THE SAME.

“BRYAN STATION, ROCKY MOUNTAINS, *Saturday, March 25th, 1871*.

“Another day has whirled us farther and still farther away. . . . The skies are cloudless and the air marvellously pure. We have the usual motley description of fellow-passengers—a man and wife with four children, the youngest a squalling baby; five or six oilmen, full of cards, champagne, and slang; an old teamster, who travelled this road by wagon, now taking his young wife across; five nuns from Montreal, *en route* to found a sisterhood in California; and three young Japanese with their guide, philosopher and friend. On the whole we get on very well, and I am not too much tired, though we have now come 870 miles from Omaha. I have occupied one seat by day and berth by night during all that time. Shortly after mailing my letter of yesterday, we climbed up to the highest point on the road, Sherman, 8,235 feet above the level of the sea. The country is very uninteresting and mostly desert. As I write, nothing but the dreariest prospect is seen from the windows, the Wahsatch range of mountains capped with snow being the only redeeming feature. . . . It seems a wonderful thing to have been all this time travelling, and to be still a thousand miles from the end of the continent, and from the end of our journey, but so it is. . . .”

TO THE SAME.

"SALT LAKE CITY, *Sunday Afternoon, March 26th, 1871.*

"It is a brilliant day, the sky is cloudless and blue like that of Italy. We have twice attended service in the Mormon tabernacle, and this afternoon have heard Orson Pratt, their best man. The large tabernacle is not in use. It will hold 13,000 people. The small one contains 3,000 comfortably and was quite filled. They were singing as we went in this morning, 'God moves in a mysterious way,' to the tune of 'Coronation.'"

FROM NOTES OF TRAVEL.

"The tabernacle was quite full. The men and women sit apart. It was an interesting study to watch the countenances of the congregation. There were some, indeed, the expression of whose faces was decidedly benevolent, though an irresolution about the mouth betrayed the latent weakness of will, which would make them passive instruments under the leadership of a crafty brain, if the owner of it claimed to be inspired. The women were decidedly homely, and for the most part stolid, as if they carried a dead past about with them, but had become so accustomed to it as not to know that it *was* dead. Presently a stout, farmer-looking man, verging upon sixty, rose, divested himself leisurely of his overcoat, and began to preach. No text formed the basis of his discourse, but it was a lengthened exposition of the doctrines of the Church of Latter Day Saints established by Joe Smith. . . . At the expiration of an hour we wended our way again to the tabernacle. Bread and water were on the bishop's table, which were severally blessed and handed round without discrimination to all present who chose to partake. This is the Mormon sacrament. Then a well-knit man, with an intellectual face, long grey beard, sonorous voice, and not ungraceful action, began to speak. This was *Orson Pratt*, the great gun of the Mormons as a public speaker. He took his text from Isaiah xl. 1—3. 'Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God,' etc. He began by a description of the apostasy of the Jews, and argued that the curse would rest upon them until the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled. He proceeded to argue that these times were in course of fulfilment, that the angel had made the revelation of the gospel to Joseph Smith, and that the labours of Mormon missionaries had given almost every man his chance, they preaching 'for a witness' unto all people; and that shortly, he did not exactly know the time, but 'you young men will see it,' addressing those on his right, when the 'ensign' of which the prophet spoke would be set 'upon a hill' in the neighbourhood of Salt Lake City, and they would have to gather thither the 'dispersed of Judah' while the poor Gentiles were left to uncovenanted mercy. He then launched out into a rhapsody on the Pacific Railway as a fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy, 'Prepare ye the way for the people.' Had they not done that when they came through

the desert with ox-teams and mule carts and wheelbarrows? 'Cast up the highway.' What was that but the great Pacific Railroad? They had gathered out the stones in the rugged mountain, and prepared two hundred miles of 'way for the ransomed to pass over.' 'Go through the gates.' I wonder, he said, that Isaiah understood this matter so well. He could not if he had not been inspired. What are these gates but '*tunnels*'? The people were to come 'with speed.' Did not that speak of the express train, in contrast with the ox-cart of the former time? Then the Messiah would come in power, and His glory should be revealed on these mountains of the West, and 'all flesh should see it together.' The elders, who, by the way, looked as unlike seventy celestials as could well be conceived, responded assentingly at intervals, and probably felt the thrill of a new sensation as they heard of prophecy fulfilling itself in their ungainly forms. They and the men generally appeared to regard his exposition as masterly. The women never moved a muscle, but were stolid and expressionless, as I had heard them described.

"We obtained admittance to the large tabernacle, 250 feet long by 150 wide, and 60 feet from floor to ceiling. It is a huge building with a roof like a dish cover, of a single span, supported by 46 pillars. It is said by Mormon measurement to seat 13,000 people, but perhaps 8,000 would be nearer the mark. . . . In the evening I preached in the 'upper room' to a large and motley congregation of about 300 persons, the strangest gathering I ever addressed, and assembled in the strangest place, and amid the most marvellous surroundings. There were Methodists, Mormons, Mormonesses, Apostate Mormons, Josephites, Godbeites, the chief justice, the colonel commanding at the camp, and a large number of United States officers. Among the congregation was Orson Pratt's first wife, a pale, crushed woman, out of whose heart the joy of life had been trampled by the system, and who has lived 'apart' for some years rather than sanction by her presence the invasion of her home; and I also met and shook hands with several who had heard me in England, and who are now under the shadow of this dark imposture. The minister in charge, who offered prayer, asked the Lord 'to take the *links* out of our nature.' It is to be hoped the desire was accepted in spite of the expression. . . . We were wearied with the day's exercises, and retired to rest convinced that there are many things connected with this marvellous deception of Mormonism that are worthy of being thought out at length. It may not be hastily dismissed as a vulgar imposture. It is a crafty and powerful lie, and the fanaticism which it kindles in its votaries has in it a spurious chivalry akin to that which dwelt in the crusaders of old.

"*March 29th.*—During the night we crossed into the El Dorado State, the State of *California*. . . . According to one of our party we went through twenty-seven snow sheds on the Rocky Mountains, and twenty-

nine on the Sierras. The summits of the Sierras are not barren like the Rocky Mountains, but covered with rich forests of pine. Shortly before reaching the highest point on the line we entered what seemed the very patriarch of snow-sheds. We waited with considerable patience for the end of it, that we might be rewarded by a glimpse of Sierra scenery, when the conductor happened to pass through the car. 'How long is this snow-shed?' was the question. Fancy our dismay when the answer came, '*Thirty-seven miles!*' We subsided, and then appeared a very general impression that the scenery which we could *not* see was not so very grand after all. These snow-sheds, which are necessary for the safety of the journey, detract very much from the pleasure of it. From Elko to the Emigrant Gap, a distance of some 380 miles, much of the scenery is hidden by these envious but useful appendages. They are necessary to keep the track clear from avalanches in the winter and spring, and have been erected at a cost of \$10,000 per mile. . . .

"At Blue Canyon we look down into a deceitful depth which reminded me of the Cardinelli on the Splügen, and then there is a momentary gasp of fear and rapture as we realise *the* sensation of the journey, the rounding of Cape Horn, where from the brink of a precipice, out of which the road has been cut, we look down within a yard of the edge upon a chasm of 2,500 feet, which dwarfs the American river at the foot of it into a small thread of silver. In rounding Cape Horn we travel three miles to secure half a mile's advance. . . . Whirling along in our zig-zag track, we follow bright streams of water used in 'placer' mining, see hardy miners with their 'pipes' playing and tearing down the mountains in search of the shining dust. Acres upon acres have been subjected to this hydraulic cruelty, and the mountain streams are all muddy and troubled by the dirt thus injected into their channels. Now come the foot hills of the mountains, bright with their manzanita garment—a shrub very like the arbutus at Killarney—with shining leaves and clusters of pink and white blossoms, and then we sweep down into the Sacramento valley, to find the country green as an emerald, the almond and the peach in blossom, the spring flowers dotting the meadows, and the earth smiling with the promise of plenty, having passed in two short hours from the region of snow and the barrenness of winter to the bloom and the beauty of spring. . . . The train sped along, through meadows besprent with flowers, lupin and buttercup and larkspur, which made my pulse beat quickly with memories of home. The flora of California is far more like that of dear old England than of the States. . . . By-and-by we ran over the long bridge at Oaklands, the aristocratic suburb, were met by Dr. Cox, the Rev. O. Gibson, and some lay friends, and crossed the magnificent bay, where all the navies of the world could anchor. There is San Francisco, the queen city of the Pacific, and yonder is the *Golden Gate*, with the purple glory of the sunset bringing its glory into relief."

TO HIS DAUGHTER.

“SAN FRANCISCO, April 1st, 1871.

“... In the evening of Thursday we went up the bay by steam to Vallejo and thence by rail to Calistoga, where our party occupied a cottage that had three beds in it. It is the Saratoga of the Pacific Coast, and the hotel has seventeen cottages built round it for families in the summer. . . . Yesterday morning at six we started to see the Geysers. . . . It is wonderful to see once, but as much like one's ideas of the place of torment as you could wish to see. But the drive! Oh the drive! I cannot describe it. *I never had such an excitement in my life.* The first eighteen miles we were driven in an open wagon by Mr. Connelly, a very good driver, who handled his four horses well. The scenery *English* and very beautiful, winding through gorges and canyons, crossing streams, etc., and still getting higher. At Foss Station we were delivered over into the hands of Foss, the champion driver of the world, who was to take us the remaining twelve miles and back in a coach and six horses. Foss is a fine, manly, handsome fellow, of about fifty years of age, six feet one inch high in his boots, and weighing two hundred and fifty pounds. Such driving I never saw nor expect to see again.”

FROM NOTES OF TRAVEL.

“*March 31st.*—With all the despotism of an autocrat, Foss told us the hours we were to observe, and the rules for successful and enjoyable riding. We were not long in discovering that besides his physical qualities he had mental and moral ones; inimitable coolness, shrewd mother-wit, great power of nerve and will, and a lawless and primitive sense of natural justice. We soon made the acquaintance of his team, of which *he* makes companions—‘John’ and ‘Ned,’ the well-trained and highly educated ‘leaders,’ ‘Heenan’ and ‘Limber Jem,’ the ‘swing;’ the latter started off so rampant that Foss told him in words which he could not fail to understand (for he says they know his talk if it isn’t good), that he would come back like a sick cat;—and ‘Hemingway’ and ‘Jeff Davis,’ the ‘wheelers’;—the latter, as might be supposed, a reconstructed rebel, who had been reclaimed only a week before, and who certainly justified the amnesty, for he worked in his new sphere obediently, gamely, and well. But how shall pen describe the ever-growing interest and excitement of that wonderful ride! When the first steep place came, like the people whom Mark Twain met in the steam boat, we had an attack of the ‘Oh! My!’ complaint. Foss turned round and almost indignantly declared himself to be a perfectly safe driver,—‘the biggest coward that ever pulled a rein.’ On the first breathless spurt of the horses over what seemed to us passably dangerous ground, the hands almost involuntary clutched the iron. Foss turned round: ‘When I was a lad, I once tried to hold a ship down, and I

found I couldn't,' and with provoking calmness left us to make the application. Oh, that ride, that ride! Up and on, up and down and on, now pausing on a plateau to trace the Russian river through its windings for some thirty-five miles, now climbing towards the pile on the summit of the Geyser mountain; pulling, stretching, trotting, galloping, with waving manes and tails erect with excitement, now with a whoop, now with a halloo; Foss now flinging the reins on one side in a heap to turn the leaders round a sharp corner, now jumping, the whole team lifted almost from the ground as if grasped in a strong hand, speaking cheerily to the flagging or reproachfully to the eccentric or to the lazy; surely never was such a drive before; and when we crossed the Hog's Back at full gallop for two miles and a half, the horses flying like the coursers of the sun, with two thousand feet sheer down from a road just wide enough for the wagon and no more; and finally, when the Geyser Canyon appeared in sight but eighteen hundred feet below us, and the road so frightfully steep as to suggest nothing but the side of a house, and we plunged down the declivity and rounded the fierce curves on a keen trot, and with an apparent recklessness of life and limb, the interest culminated into a painful excitement, and we stepped from the carriage at the foot of the hill like Fitz James after the combat,

‘Unwounded at the dreadful close,
But breathless all.’

“I suppose Foss is ignorant of the science of mathematics, but his driving was the most accurate and skilful calculation, both of force and distance, that I ever saw. We were almost too exhausted with excitement to walk through the canyon, which we did, however, to be *en règle*, under the leadership of a very stupid guide. . . . Descending from the hotel, about seventy-five feet, you first meet a spring of iron, sulphur and soda, temperature 73° Fahrenheit. The first spring going up the Geyser Gulch is the tepid alum and iron incrustated, temperature 97°, and with a very heavy iridescent incrustation of iron which forms in a single night. Twenty feet from this we pass the medicated Geyser bath, temperature 88°, and containing ammonia, Epsom salts, magnesia, sulphur, iron, etc. As you pass up the canyon, the ground on which you tread yields to the footsteps, as if there were cavernous regions not far away, and you begin humming almost unconsciously ‘*Facilis descensus Averni*.’ By-and-by you come to spots which are yet more suggestively infernal. The Witch’s Caldron, seven feet in diameter and of unknown depth, whose contents thrown up two or three feet, are semi-liquid and blacker than ink; the Devil’s Den; the Devil’s Inkstand, with whose contents, if you so please, you can write a legible letter on the spot; the Devil’s Kitchen, where the steam ‘bubbles and seethes, and hisses and roars,’ as if the hell-broth were continually brewing; the Mountain of Fire, with its hundred orifices; and the

great Steamboat Geyser, sounding like a high-pressure boiler blowing off steam so heated as to be invisible until it is six feet from the mouth—not to mention minor cells in the unceasing laboratory where alum, magnesia, tartaric acid, Epsom salts, ammonia, nitre and sulphur, are all being worked, as by unseen chemists, into marvellous combinations. As you look upon it all, and upon the blasted canyon, bare of heath and flower, in which not a solitary grass-blade grows, though to the very verge the greensward comes lovingly, and over it bend the pitiful trees, like mercy over an obdurate sinner, you need no livelier representation of hell. It is a strange sight, and it leaves a weird memory. The return ride was fine and enjoyable, as we had acquired confidence in Clarke Foss and in his team, and we reached Calistoga about 8 p.m., sore, stiff and weary, but replete with memories of this day's wonderful ride."

On the 1st of April Mr. Punshon returned to San Francisco. The next day, Sunday, he preached at the dedication of a new church, and visited the schools and mission work amongst the Chinese, and on the Monday he visited a heathen temple. It is thus described.

FROM NOTES OF TRAVEL.

"*April 3rd.*— . . We went first into a Chinese joss-house—not an imitation one, but a veritable heathen temple—where these idolaters are in the habit of worshipping. To the right as we entered, was an idol, who is said to be a mere door-keeper god. A large and highly elaborate junk hangs in the doorway. On the left are a large ball and gong, and behind them a furnace. As you pass behind the screen into the principal chamber, on the right is an idol with a fierce complexion. This is the god of war. In the centre is the great sombre Father of Heaven, with an attendant deity on either hand. On the left is the Mother of Heaven, that is, as a Chinaman astutely said, 'like, you know, the Virgin Mary.' In a chamber on the right is the god of letters, and on the left, the goddess to whom, when they want favours, the women pay their vows. Burning sandal-wood realised the idea of the ancient vestal fire, and innumerable little chips had been stuck in and lighted by successive worshippers. These had gone out; but the three tall sticks in front of the chief divinity, as indeed before all the others, smoked in ceaseless offering. In front of all was a table upon which were basins filled with rice, salad, meat, cakes, etc. These were offerings to the gods.

"In a niche, covered by a curtain, was a brass statue of what seemed to be a warrior god. It was altogether a novel and admonitory spectacle.

A heathen temple in full blast in a professedly Christian city. But God sends the heathen to the gospel, when His Church is too penurious or too short-sighted to send the gospel to the heathen. After leaving the joss-house we walked on through China town. Their gambling-houses are very numerous, and upon their neighbourhood about whole streets devoted to prostitution."

The voyage from San Francisco to Vancouver Island (April 5—11) was anxious and perilous, and the poor accommodation and equipment of the ship on which he sailed call forth unusual expressions of disappointment and indignation. On the 11th he reached Victoria, and taking another steamer he proceeded "through exquisite coast and island scenery" to Nanaimo.

FROM NOTES OF TRAVEL.

"*April 12th.*—The parsonage at Nanaimo commands a fine view of the bay and inlets, with the snowy ridges of the coastline of the Cascade range closing up the view. In the forenoon we started in a large canoe manned by four Indian rowers, for Newcastle Island, where is a large fine stone quarry, the stone of which is being used in the building of the new Provincial Mint in 'Frisco.' Reclined in the bottom of the canoe, I was paddled along against a strong tide, with no care but to gaze upon the sky and watch the movements of two large eagles that were sailing above us in the azure. After inspecting the quarry and peering into the Indian huts, we sailed down, the tide being with us, two miles in fifteen minutes. After dinner passed the coal mine, now still because even in this far north there are strikes among the workmen, and went to the Indian village, in which are two streets named respectively the 'Heathen' and 'Christian' street. We passed first through the heathen quarter, and went into some of the abodes. A long, low, wooden building, without chimneys, without windows, with one common door, in which eight or nine families were herding together. As I went into one, the old chief, a veritable *Flat-head*, proud and dirty, innocent of clothing save a blanket and a pipe! arose and shambled forward to greet us, while the squaw sat crooning over the fire, and through the smoke could be seen the little papooses either sprawling in primitive nakedness or strapped tightly in their cradles. Thence to the higher street, in which Christian Indians lived in homely but trim-looking houses, thrifty, comfortable, and 'each family apart. The bell summoned them to worship, and we had an interesting service.

About thirty women and twenty men assembled in the neat frame school-house which would not disgrace places of far greater pretension, and I spoke to them through an interpreter—then a native teacher addressed them. I baptised ‘Reuben’ and ‘Margaret,’ two lively little papooses. I wish the believers in self-exalting humanity, who are sceptical of the success of Christian missions, could be just set down at Nanaimo, and compare for themselves the Heathen and the Christian streets of the Indian village.

On the 13th Mr. Punshon returned to Victoria. The 14th and 15th were given to business of the District Meeting.

FROM JOURNAL.

“*April 10th.*—A full and rich Sabbath. Preached at 10 a.m., and afterwards held the first ordination under Wesleyan auspices on the Pacific Coast, by ordaining the Rev. Thomas Crosby, a native of Yorkshire, who has devoted himself to this Indian work with an assiduity that is above all praise, and with an aptitude and skill that make him a very valuable agent.”

Crossing over to New Westminster on the 18th, and up the Fraser River on the 19th, Mr. Punshon visited the Mission of Sumass and Chilliwack, one of the most flourishing missions among the Indians.

“*April 20th.*—Started at daybreak and began labouring upward against the current. The scenery increasingly grand, for we were under the shadow of mountains 3,000 feet high. About 8 a.m. reached Fort Hope, formerly the head of navigation for the miners, and a town of 5,000 inhabitants. It has dwindled now to the proportion of an insignificant village. Breakfasted on sturgeon and salmon. Came shortly to Union Bar, the most difficult place in the river, where the downward current was so strong, that we had to be towed up with a rope, sixteen men working the windlasses, and all steam on at the same time. Came in sight of several gold-miners at work on the banks of a fine spray or waterfall, and of a summit of snow 5,000 feet high. Passed the ‘sisters,’ twin rocks that stand on either side in mid-stream, leaving only about forty feet of a channel. At about half-past 11 a.m. we arrived in Fort Yale, the head of navigation on the Fraser. . . . Yale is grandly situated, just like several Swiss villages

which I could name, for example Meyringen, and our walk was by a foaming river beneath overshadowing hills, and with the noise of avalanches crashing every now and then upon our ears. About half a mile from Yale we came to an Indian grave-yard. One enclosed grave had four wild geese sculptured rudely, one at each corner. The neat burial-house had in front a solid board twelve feet long by two feet wide, on which were carved figures of men at each end and in the centre, with four white bears on each side of the centre figure, the ground being painted red, the bears white, and the figures black and blue. A third house had an enormous figure of a shark and two hideous Indian faces. . . . The bell went round to summon the people to worship in the dilapidated and unused Methodist church of Yale, and I preached in these far wilds to about forty people, one of whom, now living next door to the church, used to hear me preach in Whitehaven, twenty-five years ago—so strangely do lives touch at the opposite poles of contact. . . . The population of Yale, formerly 5,000, is now like that of Hope, about 250, amongst whom they bitterly complain are only *nine* ladies who are available to figure in a ball.

"April 21st.—The anniversary of my arrival on American soil! What fierce heats and bitter winds have beaten on my life since then. A roseate dream, with a rude awakening to a wintry morning.

"Had a pleasant voyage down the Fraser. . . . Arrived in New Westminster about 3 p.m., and after a hurried lunch at Mr. Cunningham's, started off for Burnard's Inlet, on a stage. Our road to Burnard's Inlet led us through a forest which at last realised my ideal conception of a forest. . . . There was no glimpse of the horizon for the whole twelve miles, the brushwood lying so rankly that you could not walk through it without an axe to clear your way before you, and magnificent girths of fir and cedar lay along the ground, where some solitary feller had 'come up against the trees,' or towered to the heavens, where the aisles of the woodland had not been touched by the hand of man. There was hardly a tree in the forest less than 150 feet high, and some fully 300 in height, and from forty to fifty feet round. Some of the trees we saw will make forty cords of split wood, besides waste. . . .

"On our return journey the driver stopped on a lonely and frail bridge, in the densest part of the forest, and demanded his fare. It had an ugly look, as the shadows of night were gathering rapidly, but we resisted stoutly, and he drove on sullenly to New Westminster. We got in before the utter darkness, and did not therefore hear the bay of the cougars that abound in the forest, and make night hideous as they prowl in search of prey.

"April 22nd.—. . . Left at 10 a.m. per steamer *Enterprise* for Victoria. By-and-by Mount Baker broke forth in all his grandeur, as if indignant at being written down a myth, and was anxious to

vindicate his reputation. There he towered majestic and solitary, 10,694 feet high. The Gulf of Georgia was rather rough as we crossed it, but the sky was exquisitely clear, and I question whether anywhere else there could be seen a mountain panorama of so great majesty unless among the Swiss Alps."

The 23rd and 24th were spent in Victoria. On the 25th Mr. Punshon sailed for Olympia, and thence took stage to Monte Cello. On the 28th he sailed for Portland. In his notes the bad roads and charming scenery are mentioned, and so too is the rapid progress of the country from the wilderness to civilisation, one typical instance being given in "Kalam, a city six weeks old, and containing already good three-storey buildings and a population of five hundred." On the 29th he sailed for San Francisco, where he arrived on the 3rd of May. On the 6th his party set their faces homeward again, taking on the way the excursion to the Big Trees and the Yo Semite Valley.

FROM NOTE-BOOK.

"*May 10th.*—Rose at half-past four, and after breakfasting on a rooster, which Mr. B—— helped to chase the night before, by a little after six were in our saddles. My horse was a gallant grey, named 'Mono.' Three miles and a half's riding brought us to the grove of Big Trees. We felt awed and dwarfed as we gazed upon these monarchs of the forest. There were some twenty-five or thirty of them. We measured three which must be from eighty to ninety feet in circumference. We stood up against one which was fallen, and it would have taken three men of the size of Benson to get to the top of the trunk as it lay in its ruins upon the ground. From the grove we proceeded to Crane Flat; thence through dense forests, with occasional glimpses of snow-capped mountains, to Tamarack Flat, where the stage ought to have taken us; thence three miles to Prospect Point, from which is a magnificent view of a canyon and where the descent into the valley begins. That descent, who can describe? It had better be left descriptionless. At last it was over, and the ride up the wonderful valley began. Words utterly fail me. As in Sir Walter Scott's description of his ideal of the picture of a battle:

‘First “a gude stour,” then an arm and a leg gleaming through it, and all the rest to the imagination of the spectator ;’ so with me and the Yo Semite. Lauterbrunnen is the Yo Semite in miniature. Here the walls are higher and the scenery wilder, and the cascades more numerous. The Bridal Veil is exquisitely beautiful, and the Ribbon Fall and Sentinel Cascade graceful as silver streaked upon emerald, but the Lower Yo Semite Fall moved me to tears, as also did the majestic El Capitan, to my mind the most impressive and magnificent rock I ever saw, and the gem of the valley. The majestic immobility, the calm and stately grandeur with which El Capitan overshadows the valley, like a huge couchant lion, and the poetry of motion, the delicate and endless grace with which the water shimmers into spray, while the gnome of the waterfall watches it as with an evil eye,—these combined make the two scenes memories for ever.”

FROM JOURNAL.

“*May 26th.*—Since my last entry, how marvellous have been the preserving mercies of the Lord. I have to record many loving-kindnesses. I have taken a long journey. I have been preserved by land and sea, through many excitements, discomforts, and pleasures, through 8,800 miles of travel. . . . I have been permitted to testify for Christ, I humbly trust not without success, in regions which I may never see again. My soul is full of gratitude. . . .”

CHAPTER XIV.

1871—1872.

CANADA.—ENGLAND.—CANADA. Aged 47, 48.

Visit to England.—Addresses the Conference at Manchester.—Continued Labours in Canada.—Physical Depression.—Christmas.—A Grandfather.—Dedication of the Metropolitan Church.—General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1872.—Degree of LL.D.

JOURNAL.

"*June 19th, 1871.*—On June 1st my daughter was married to the man of her choice, one in whose hands I may safely trust her. . . . I went off immediately to Conference, which, by God's blessing, has passed off pleasantly and profitably. There is improvement in every department of Church action, a numerical increase of 211 members, and a hearty brotherliness among the preachers which it was refreshing to see. Felt prostrate in body when it was all over, but thankful and restful in mind. They not only elected me President, but nominated me by a large vote for President in 1872. This, done without my concurrence, and during my temporary absence from the Conference, may be providential, and I await the issue. I was also appointed Representative to the British Conference ; and, accompanied by my daughter and her husband, propose to sail on Saturday for England."

To E. D—.

"S.S. 'MORAVIAN,' ATLANTIC OCEAN, *July 3rd, 1871.*

"... I feel as though in some unknown manner this visit will furnish me with indications by which to determine my future. The demonstrations of respect which greeted me when troops of friends accompanied me to the ship in Toronto were very affecting. What *is* my duty?—Who shall tell me?"

If he had been looking for indications of the way of duty in the signs of respect given to him, and in high appreciation of his labours, he might well be in the perplexity expressed in this letter. It seemed as if no people could respect and love him more than did the people of Canada; but any one who witnessed his reception in England in the summer of 1871 must admit, as does the writer of these lines, himself a Canadian, that Mr. Punshon was even more loved and honoured in England than he was in Canada. It could only be because the English people knew him longer and better. Moreover, the old friends are, like the old wine, ever the best.

The following account of his reception in England, and of his address in the Free Trade Hall, is taken from the *Christian Guardian*, the official organ of the Methodist Church in Canada.

“The reception of Mr. Punshon in England, after his sojourn of over three years in Canada, has been of the most enthusiastic kind. His name scarcely appeared in public till he burst upon the Conference with a suddenness and power that startled them out of all staid propriety. Before he was introduced to the Conference, when he and the Rev. Gervase Smith came upon the platform, the vast audience rose and cheered, and waved hats and handkerchiefs in token of welcome. This was repeated when he arose to address the Conference. In addressing him, the President said,—

“Every heart in this assembly goes with that cheer. We have watched your career in the great and glorious country to which your path has been directed. We rejoice and give thanks to God for the honour which He has put upon you, and the work He has enabled you to do. We see you amongst us again with thankfulness to Him, and with feelings of unspeakable affection towards yourself. We have never lost sight of you. (Cheers.) Never forgotten you. (Renewed cheers.) You have been one of ourselves. Your name has been called over every year as a member of this Conference since you left us. Your name has been called over to-day. I rejoice that it will appear in the record of this year as present in our deliberations, and on your own account I greet you in the name of the

Lord, and on account of that noble Church, at the head of which it has pleased Him to place you during the last three years.' (Cheers.) "

Mr. Punshon's address which followed, was distinguished as usual by its comprehensive range of topics and skilful arrangements, and by the beauty and force of thought and language which it displayed. It is no disparagement to our former representatives to say that never before were the character, the claims, and the works of Canadian Methodism so fully and forcibly brought before the English Conference. Every Canadian will thank Mr. Punshon for his manly and truthful representation of the position of affairs in Canada. His statement as to the tendency of the English Colonial policy was clear and unquestionable. The occasion was one of rare interest, such as a man seldom enjoys twice in a lifetime. And he was equal to the occasion. The Free Trade Hall in which the open session of Conference was held, is one of the finest halls in England. The *Recorder* estimates the audience at six thousand. Of these over eight hundred were ministers. But they were all as one man stirred to laughter, sorrow, wonder, or high and heroic purpose at the will of the orator, who spoke on behalf of Canadian Methodism with such eloquence and power. Probably no previous oratorical effort of his life was more effective and impressive. The *Watchman* says:—

"The interest or rather the enthusiasm of the meeting culminated when Mr. Punshon was introduced as the President and representative of the Canadian Conference. . . . Mr. Punshon is somewhat sunburnt with his extensive travels, but is apparently in perfect health. As he rose his looks gave evidence of deep emotion, but that emotion he repressed, apparently not without effort. Never have we heard him speak with greater beauty or power. He told of the vast extent of British North America,

its varied populations, their moral and religious necessities, the remarkable progress made by Methodism during the last seventeen years, and the influential position it now holds. He described the work of Methodism among the colonists of English descent, the Germans, the French, the Indians, and the Chinese. He dwelt at large upon the educational efforts of our Church, its literature, and the character of its rising ministry. He gave to his hearers beautiful glimpses of the regions he had visited in the Far West, and after alluding for a moment with exquisite tenderness to the sorrows he had been called to bear, he spoke of former Manchester Conferences, recalling the time when he stood as a candidate for ordination in the Oldham Street Chapel, and the time when he received the honour of election into the Hundred, the youngest member upon whom that honour had ever been bestowed. He then uttered words of encouragement as to the present state of the Church, exhorting his brethren to be full of heart and hope."

The *Recorder* says:—

"It would be difficult to analyse and define delicately the feeling of the vast mass of people who rose to greet him with shouts, and waving of hats, handkerchiefs, umbrellas, and all movable things. But I shall not be far wrong when I surmise that the predominant emotion was deep personal affection, sympathy with his great services past, and joy at his return. English Methodists have kept his place vacant in their hearts." . . . The *Recorder* also thinks "that Mr. Punshon's address made it evident that he was all the richer for Canada, that the administrator was as conspicuous as the rhetorician. The accumulations of experience have added value to the prolific gifts." It adds: "It is currently rumoured that Mr. Punshon will return to Canada in the autumn, and it is as generally anticipated that he will come to this country again in about two years to abide. Should this be so, he will bring with him treasures of experience of which Methodism will have need."

This reception at Manchester was repeated in kind, if not in degree, wherever he appeared in England. There was no mistaking it—it was the call of the Church to her son, and to him it was the call of God. A term was now set to his stay in Canada, and the year 1873 was fixed as the time of his return to the work of the mother Church in England.

Early in September, 1871, he returned to Canada, his niece, a daughter of the late Thomas Panton, of Sunderland, returning with him to keep up the light and warmth of his home during the remainder of his stay in America.

TO E. D——.

“S. S. ‘NESTORIAN,’ AT SEA, *September 19th*, 1871.

“I believe that humbled and unworthy as I feel myself, I am somewhat mellowed, purged of self, made meeter for the office I fill, and for the fellowship I long for. . . . God’s mercy has been very marked during my recent visit, and I should be ungrateful indeed to forget it. The kindness of my friends, the heartiness of my reception everywhere, the many instances in which God threw into my way in unexpected places those to whom I had been useful; the honest love which lighted up the eyes of many when they saw me; the improved health of some who are more to me than I can tell; the tender, reverencing gentleness, with which even those who knew her slightly speak of my lost angel,—all these things, gifts of God, springs of healing in the very regions where I feared there were the Marah fountains only . . . demand my life in gratitude and my expressions of praise.”

TO MRS. T. F. C. M——.

“TORONTO, *September 28th*, 1871.

“We reached Quebec on Monday morning at 3 A.M., and Toronto on Wednesday morning, at 1 A.M. Eight or nine friends met us at the station. Early as it was we had a splendid run across the Atlantic, but were stopped by fog off the Straits of Belle Isle, and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. I think we are all the better for our voyage. The enforced rest of it did me no harm. Our house looks very nice. My niece is charmed with it, and I hope we may have, by God’s blessing, a good and happy year. . . . My memories of my English ‘dream’ (I can hardly call it a visit), are very fragrant, and among the choicest, those which cluster round Park House and its dear circle. Many, many thanks for all your kindnesses. They are deeply graven on a heart which does not soon or willingly forget.”

JOURNAL.

“*October 1st*, 1871.—. . . The meeting with old friends was chequered by many conflicting feelings, but, on the whole a source of enjoyment. I was enabled to speak boldly before the Conference, and privileged to declare the counsel of God to the largest multitude who have ever

gathered to hear me. Without any influence of mine the vote for my return to England in two years was carried unanimously, amid the warmest expressions of affection and esteem. But what am I that I should be thus regarded? 'When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.'"

For twenty months longer Mr. Punshon continued his labours in Canada. The story of this period will be told almost wholly in extracts from his letters and journals, so that it may be called a chapter of autobiography. The point of view will change frequently, and sometimes, perhaps, abruptly, but the reader can scarcely fail to discern the connection of the story.

In some of these selections we read of suffering as well as labouring for the sake of Christ and of His Gospel. And when we remember that the preacher might at any time have turned aside to other pursuits that offered comparative ease and opulence, but was kept at his post by a sense of loyalty to God and to the Church, our admiration deepens into the reverence we pay to those who bear in their bodies "the marks of the Lord Jesus."

To E. D—.

"ST. CATHARINE'S, ONTARIO, *October 8th, 1871.*

.. Another source of disquietude is the physical *agony*, I can call it by no softer name, which I have so often to endure in the pulpit. It seems so strange, when all my thoughts should be concentrated on my subject, to have it so often engrossed upon my miserable self; and that those preliminary services which should be preludes of praise to the great anthem that is to follow, should be so often frittered away in nervous apprehensions of fainting or dying there and then. Oh, it is grievous, and I feel often as I did this morning, as I did in Liverpool Road, as I did in Oxford Place, that I *cannot* bear it, and must regard it as a token that I am unfitted physically for the work of the ministry. Then again, I remember my deliverances—how I have cried mightily unto

God, and He has helped me, and I have preached to the congregation with a measure of power, when to myself it has seemed the most utter and contemptible failure, and I have wondered whether it is not my thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me."

TO THE REV. GERVASE SMITH.

"TORONTO, *October 19th*, 1871.

"... The *Recorder* brings news of the death of Felvus and Vasey. Poor Vasey!—and yet what a triumphant end. Oh, to be so honoured and crowned at last! . . .

"What a fearful thing is this Chicago fire. I know the whole burnt ground well. The Farwell Hall, in which I preached to four thousand people in April, and in which I delivered the inaugural lecture three years ago, consumed again. The Crosby Opera House, where I first lectured; the Clark Street Church, where the last general Conference was held; every bank, theatre, insurance office, and four square miles of dwellings, all gone. . . . One of our friends just come from Chicago, reports the re-commencement of business by a man—a thriving tradesman last week—ruined by the fire. He has stuck up a rude signboard on which he has painted his name and business, and these words, '*All lost but wife, children, and energy.*'"

JOURNAL.

"*November 10th*, 1871.—. . . Excellent missionary services in Montreal this week. Spirit and feeling very good. Dr. Tiffany spoke so well that it was hard to follow him, and I felt roused to prevent the meeting from flagging. Troubled afterwards about it, and had an earnest questioning of motives as to whether, after all, I had not made it a sort of intellectual gladiatorship. I trust the Lord will ever save me from this. Sir A. G.— sent a beautiful letter with an offer of financial help; but the letter was worth more than the money, for it seemed to indicate a work of grace in the heart. Tokens of good here and there in the Church. Why art thou disquieted, O my soul? God hath not forsaken thee."

TO THE REV. WM. HIRST.

"TORONTO, *December 7th*, 1871.

"On Thursday last I preached at Drummondville within hearing of the thunder of Niagara. Friday I travelled 300 miles to Albany, and lectured in the evening. Sunday I preached in the large hall, where I had lectured, to about two thousand people. Monday, I travelled 150 miles in snow and sleet, and lectured in Syracuse. Tuesday, travelled 200 miles, and lectured in Hamilton. Yesterday, travelled 100 miles, and lectured in London. To-day have come 120 miles home."

JOURNAL.

"December 7th, 1871.—A week of unusually severe weather, travel, and work, but not unblest. A prevailing power to stay myself upon God. Humbled much in the reading of Mr. Wesley's life. Oh, how intensely he was consecrated! What self-renunciation! What ceaseless breathing after God! I would fain catch somewhat of his spirit afresh. . . . Some signs of good in the Churches."

"December 10th, 1871.—Privileged to speak for God this morning, and I trust to speak faithfully, to the multitudes to whom I am as one that can play well upon an instrument. God knows, I do not want applause—but souls."

To E. D——.

"December 21st, 1871.—I write on the coldest day which Canada has known for many years, and that is saying a great deal. I have just come in from Amora, thirty miles distant, where I preached last night. I slept in a wretchedly cold room. When I woke this morning my brow was like marble, the water was frozen an inch thick in the basin, and I found afterwards that the thermometer was thirty-four degrees below zero. Under these circumstances you can hardly expect ideas to flow freely—although there is *no winter in the heart*. . . ."

JOURNAL.

"December 25th, 1871.—All praise to our own God who has brought me to another sweet Advent season. I have felt near to God in the blessed thought of God coming near to me. I trust I realise more of the design of the Advent with each return of the year. . . . Sweet inspiring letters from the home-land this morning. Have hallowed the day by worship. A fine interesting sermon from dear Alfred. Somehow I wanted more of Christ. He was there, influential, pervading, but hardly central enough for Christmas."

To M. F——.

"December 31st, 1871.—Our evening service does not begin till ten o'clock, as we hold the watchnight, and I am in my study, remembering the way which the Lord hath led me, and the friends with whom He has enriched my life, as well as those other friends whom he has beckoned nearer to Himself. I preached this morning in much faintness and fear, but the Lord helped me through, and in the light of reflection I am looking into the sepulchre of the years into which another departed one will soon be fleeing. . . . I had a subdued, thankful Christmas Day, happy in chastened gladness, for I had loved ones about me, not all visible to mortal eyes, and there seemed to be a near and blessed communion. Alfred preached in the morning, and we had our customary arrangements afterwards."

TO MRS. PARKIN.

"MONTREAL, *January 25th*, 1872.

"It is exciting work travelling here in winter. When we arrived in Montreal we took a sleigh-drive. Where do you think? Across the St. Lawrence,—two miles there and two miles back on the ice! which is now nearly three feet thick. It 'takes,' as they technically call it here, with a succession of 'shoves,' so that it is not quite smooth, but there are 'hummocks' in picturesque confusion—large blocks like mountains on either side of the road, and the road marked out with little fir bushes like the avenues of a nobleman's park. It is quite arctic and altogether pleasant. At Quebec we crossed the river, again on the ice, with the swift tide running seven knots an hour under our feet, and went out six miles to the Falls of Montmorenci, still on the ice. There the spray from the falls, which are two hundred and ten feet high, congeals as it falls, and forms a cone of pure snow and ice, within which they cut out an ice refreshment-room, with ice-counters, sofas, tables, etc. The cone is largest in March, eighty or one hundred feet high, but now it is forty feet high, and the favourite amusement is to slide down its steep sides on a small sled, or 'toboggan,' which Annie accomplished several times, much to her satisfaction. I, of course, sober and old, simply gazed and wondered. . . . Have you heard of Fanny's small trial? They were with us at Christmas, and on the last day of the year Mr. Reynar got a telegram, 'Your house was burnt this morning.' The little woman bore it bravely, for her philosophic husband, when she was all impatient to know the contents of the telegram, said quietly, 'Our wigwam is gone,' which so tickled her that the shock was broken in laughter."

TO E. D—.

"NEW YORK, *January 28th*, 1872.

"On this quiet Sabbath afternoon I begin to answer your last letter, so precious that I have no adjective at hand to characterise it—a heaven-sent message to me who sorely needed one. How is it that you seem to know just the comfort or stimulus that I need at any particular time? Is it thus that God answers prayer? My prevailing temptation of late has been to fancy that I am living uselessly. My 'harass' has not gone, but for some weeks returned with increased force, so that in Toronto, December 31st, Hamilton, January 14th, and Quebec, January 31st, I had woful times, and on the last occasion (last Sunday night) was ready to pour my heart out in tears, and say 'my burden is greater than I can bear.' I am quite well when I leave the pulpit, except for the exhaustion and depression consequent on the attack, if I may so call it; but while preaching, when I should be absorbed in the grand realities of my subject, my thoughts are concentrated on my physically miserable self. To my mind

the whole service of last Sunday was a constrained effort, lacking both clearness and unction and power, and yet when I came out, and could hardly speak lest I should be betrayed into a burst of agony, there were those who spoke of the sermon as a blessed means of grace, and one especially, nearly always reticent, who thanked me in very warm terms. Now how can I understand all this? I suppose I must suffer and grow strong."

TO M. F——.

"NEW YORK, *January 29th*, 1872.

"How strange that any one should have thought me a Unitarian, who glory in the Divinity of Christ as the surest ground of hope, the foundation, ornament, and strength of the whole Christian system."

TO HIS DAUGHTER.

"NEW YORK, *January 29th*, 1872.

"... You know I came here to marry —. The drawing-room was festooned with evergreens, and on almost every available spot was a bouquet of rich flowers. Against the wall was erected an alcove of evergreens twined into a wire frame. This was called the 'Bower of Love,' and under this the couple stood to be married. The bride was dressed in sky-blue satin, with wreaths and sprays innumerable, and a train about three yards long. Her sister was the only bridesmaid, dressed in *scarlet* satin, modestly called wine colour. But she had nothing to do, and sat amongst the other guests. The ring made a little pilgrimage before it reached its destination. The groom gave it to the lady, the lady to me, and I to the groom, and he to the finger where it was to rest. This is supposed to be symbolical of the 'circle,' the endlessness of the compact, and also of the lady's willingness to go into bonds. You will be amused also, as I was, to hear that the lady never *ungloved* from the beginning to the end of the ceremony, but when the ring had to be put on she quietly slipped off *that finger of the glove which had been previously cut for the purpose!* Was there ever such a people as this for contrivances for saving trouble?"

TO MRS. PARKIN.

"TORONTO, *February 29th*, 1872.

"My very dear friend,—This is a day which comes only once in four years, fit, therefore, for the communication of startling news.

"I am a grandfather! There, it is out, the naked truth, without disguise, in all its horror. A grandfather! an elder against my will, not very *old*, not very grey; but obliged, by force of circumstances, to give up talking about youth and all its belongings, and to cultivate a long beard, and fit myself for the Sanhedrim, and all this melancholy state of things brought about by a little morsel of humanity forty hours old! yclept 'F—— E—— R——,' whose existence has only been notified to me as a matter of

testimony. It is enough to make a man forswear matrimony (for his daughters) and retire into secret places to mourn over the degeneracy of his kind.

"A truce to this. We are all very, very thankful; the underlying heart is full of gratitude for this latest mercy of God. I am undertaking a pilgrimage to-night to gaze upon the infant phenomenon. Annie flew on the wings of love for babyhood last night, and threatens to install herself as nurse for a month; and considering that Fanny has a servant who asked the other day if linseed tea was to mix with pancakes, I guess she'd better hire as cook, if Mr. R—— is to be ensured from poisoning during his wife's absence upstairs."

JOURNAL.

"*March 31st, 1872.*—Some longings after a higher life and many upward breathings, amid the excitement of preparation for the dedication services, to have the true end in view and the true spirit of worship in a holy and beautiful house."*

TO THE REV. GERVASE SMITH.

"*April 6th, 1872.*

"The church was finished and looked perfect. The day was gloriously fine although the streets were muddy. We had succeeded in getting reduced return fares from all the railways. Tiffany preached a very fine sermon, rich in good old evangelical truth. At night there were upwards of 2,300 people at a public meeting, who paid fifty cents each for tickets. We took a collection of \$265, and a subscription of \$25,000. Such a thing has never been done in Toronto before, nor indeed in Canada. We are hoping now that the total proceeds of our dedication services will be \$30,000. My heart was very full on the opening day. I remembered the stone-laying, and missed and mourned, yea and rejoiced also."

TO E. D——.

"*April 9th, 1872.*

"It will be four years to-morrow since I left England for Canada. Oh, the changes since then! But the discipline, I trust, has not been all

* The Metropolitan Church, Toronto. Of this church the Rev. Luke Wiseman, made the following statement in one of his public addresses:—"I had the privilege of preaching in that church, and it certainly is, so far as I have seen—and I have had the opportunity of seeing some of the principal church edifices connected with our body in the United States—especially internally, the first Methodist church in the world. It has cost a great deal of money, but it seems really to answer well, and there is a blessing resting upon it. The people speak of it as 'Mr. Punshon's church,' and well they may, for it would not have been called into existence but for him."

in vain. My future is a perplexity to me, and yet I know that *He* will point out my way. The friends here are very urgent for my remaining, and point to our success in this dedication as an additional argument, but the indications of the last year seem strong homeward. Eight weeks more will bring us to the Conference, and from this time forward I shall be exceedingly busy. As they have wished me to go with Mr. Perks to the General Conference, at Brooklyn, I purpose to leave for New York about May 1st, and act as his cicerone among some of the American cities, and to the Falls of Niagara. Bowman Stephenson, I find, is coming out also. It will be so refreshing to meet with old friends in this far-off, but by no means inhospitable clime."

TO THE REV. GERVASE SMITH.

"NEW YORK, *May 9th*, 1872.

"Wiseman and I have been now nearly a week together. Do you remember an evening when we paced the square in front of this house, unable to get a breath of air, and almost baked by the consuming heat? It is pretty much like that now. The summer has come, as the winter did, preternaturally, and I am writing coatless and perspiring. . . . We made our debut yesterday. Wiseman acquitted himself well, but not in his best style. He seemed a little constrained. . . . This morning we both spoke at the Bible meeting. . . . Wiseman did grandly. Gavazzi was there and spoke,—a piece of inimitable acting."

TO E. D——.

302 E, FIFTEENTH STREET, NEW YORK, *May 12th*, 1872.

". . . I have to preach this afternoon in the Brooklyn Academy of Music, which will hold 3,000 people, and the heat of the day is most oppressive. May the Great Helper assist me fully to proclaim the Truth!

"6 p.m. Hallelujah! One of the greatest occasions of my life is over. Four thousand people were present. I did not think I had freedom; there were some disturbing forces, and I was highly nervous, but my subject (Col. ii. 1, 2) inspired me. I was greatly excited and greatly exhausted, but restful in God's goodness and truth. Three of the bishops, Morris, Ames, and Simpson were there. Philip Phillips led the singing, and the benediction was pronounced by Father Baker, travelling companion of Bishop Asbury, the oldest Methodist preacher in the world, as he will be ninety-seven next June. My heart is very full of gratitude for the great privilege of which I feel too unworthy, of speaking for Jesus. . . .

"The Conference comes on, and is a great anxiety. Of course I carry out my promise and announce my decision. It will be painful. I shall be as sorry to leave Canada as I was to leave England. So far as I can judge, however, and I try to judge dispassionately, the cloud points that way."

The following passages from Dr. Punshon's address to the General Conference, at New York, in 1872, present his view of the progressive mission of Methodism, and tell of his reverence for those who have finished their course:—

‘I have observed, I think, a gradual growth in the estimation and honour in which the Wesleyan Methodist Church in England is held by all the English people ; but this has been obtained, not by the ostentatious pushing of itself into public notice, but by its consistent and earnest doing of its proper work ; it has won an almost national recognition and esteem. Time was, and not long since, when it was otherwise ; when so formidable was the reproach of Methodism, and so overshadowing the influence beneath which it wrought and suffered, that it could scarcely get sufficiently into the light to let its pure religion and undefiled come under the observation of men. It was the custom sometimes to ignore it, sometimes with an air of patronage to tolerate it, sometimes kindly to apologise for it, and at best to associate its fervour with fanaticism, and to regard it as an irregular and very humble helper, which might be suffered, though with some misgiving, to do a little guerilla-fighting in the service of Christ. For long years English Methodism bore all this very patiently, courting no antagonism ; like Nehemiah hardly deigning to come down from its great work even to defend its character, but always planting Churches and always saving souls. Now it is having its reward. Of course there are yet those who scorn, and those who hinder ; bigotry and prejudice are not by any means dead ; but the Methodism of to-day occupies a very different position from the Methodism even of twenty years ago. It is now recognised as a spiritual power. It is hailed as an energetic ally. It is even escaping from the charge of being a vulgar thing. Its representatives are in the great council of the nation. It has penetrated even into Westminster Abbey. Its sons sit among the learned on the Committee of Biblical revision ; and while thousands and tens of thousands listen to its clear teaching of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, its influences are felt like an atmosphere breathed unconsciously, like air waves breaking upon society at every point with unseen but resistless pressure.

“I know that this change in public opinion may fluctuate, and that the altered circumstances are not free from danger—just as Capua was more disastrous to the host of Hannibal than Cannæ to the Roman army ; and yet, believing, as I do, that while Methodism remains simple in purpose and strong in faith, it can leave nothing but blessings behind it, I rejoice in the ampler opportunities which are thus afforded for doing

good, and I take it that God is thus indicating His purpose that Methodism shall become more aggressive against evil than ever. Times of persecution and strife, however they may brace individual piety, are not favourable to associated endeavour. Days of obscurity and reproach are the days of the Church's testimony, when she endures hardness, and nurses heroes, and cultivates that faith of which martyrs are made. When God means her to become missionary He stills the noise of the waves and the tumult of the people, and gives rest from the enemy on all sides, and she worships not in catacombs but in temples, and she has no baptism of fire except that of the Holy Ghost, which is a lambent and cleansing flame. Her growing influence, therefore, points out her solemn duty. I trust in God she will be faithful to do it. . . .

"I have discovered what I think to be a very hopeful sign in British Methodism, and that is, that while it retains with unbending firmness all its former principles, it has become more flexible in its modes of action. It adapts itself to new necessities with an easier grace ; it looks with more indulgence upon bold efforts to do the Master's work, although they may not run quite in the groove of the former times "

"My heart would reproach me, were I to sit down without one other reference. I hardly know how to enter upon it, for as I look back to the last General Conference, and think of these four eventful years, and of the changes those years have wrought, I am as one in a dream—a dream which is bright on its heavenward side, but which on its earthward has a rude and strange awakening, a dream which the destruction of the place in which you then met, and in which I was honoured to greet you, has crystallized as by fire into an indelible memory. I seem to see the standard-bearers you have lost ; standard-bearers to whom God had given a banner that it might be displayed because of the truth, and who were worthy of the trust confided in them."

"Bishop Simpson, I think of your colleagues in office who have been smitten at your side ; *Baker*, the distinguished jurist, and *Clark*, the acute and accomplished able administrator, and preacher of commanding power ; and *Thompson*, the Chrysostom of your Church, whose large child-like spirit could not harbour a thought of guile, and who seemed as if detained on earth by slight and trembling tendrils ; and *Kingsley*, the brave and brotherly, snatched away from you in the fulness of his ripe manhood, and as if the sight of the Holy Land had but whetted his desire to go upward to the Holy Place, that from the track of the Man of Sorrows he might see the King in His beauty.

"And then I think of others, lower in office, but equal in esteem ; of *Mattison*, who first welcomed me in Jersey City, a doughty champion against the man of sin ; of *Sewell*, a burning and shining light, quenched, perhaps, by its own brightness, all too soon ; of *John M'Clintock*, that *anax andrôn*, almost an admirable Crichton in versatility of attainment,

Melanchthon in tenderness, and Luther in courage ; of *Nadal*, who drooped so soon after his friend, that it seemed as if he had got to long so much for nearer communion that he must needs ascend to join him in the presence of the Master whom they both loved.

"And then I think of a later loss than these,* a blameless and beautiful character, whose name had an hereditary charm for me, whose saintly spirit exhaled so sweet a fragrance that the perfume lingers with me yet, and who went home like a plumed warrior, for whom the everlasting doors were lifted, as he was stricken into victory in his prime, and who had nothing to do at the last but mount into the chariot of Israel and go 'Sweeping through the gates, washed in the Blood of the Lamb.'

"Sirs, these are no common losses. I weep with you on account of them, and I am gratified to weep with you, for 'a sword hath pierced into my own soul also,' and I have borne my own burden of loss and sorrow ; but these, your comrades, fell in hallowed work, on hallowed ground. Bravely they bore the banners while they lived, but the nerveless hand relaxed its hold, and they have passed them on to others."

TO MRS. PARKIN, SHEFFIELD.

"HAMILTON, CANADA, *May 20th*, 1872.

"Last Sunday afternoon I preached to four thousand people in the Brooklyn Academy of Music. It was one of the great occasions of my life, and almost entirely prostrated me, so intense were the heat, and excitement, and nervous exaltation and exhaustion ; but it was a glorious opportunity to speak for Jesus. I feel increasingly to love my lifework as I lose my fitness for it, for I fear this morbid nervousness will master me ; but the 'sufficient grace' will help me to bear even a much heavier and sharper 'thorn.' I invited Stephenson here that we might try to establish a Canadian branch of his Home. I think and hope that the Lord will open the hearts of the friends to do it. He preached with me here yesterday, and gave us a sermon of great directness, ingenuity, and power. I rejoice greatly to find him so truly baptised for his work. We are trying to look out for a farm of from fifty to one hundred acres. The work has been so evidently one of faith from the beginning that I think it will surely succeed.† I shall be about as sorry to leave Canada as I was to come to it ; but if that way points the cloud, I go, and my uncle's bereavement and consequent loneliness seem to add an additional motive to return, though I am often and grievously exercised about it."

* The Rev. Alfred Cookman, who died November 13, 1871.

† It has succeeded. The Canadian Home is a commodious building, with eight acres of land, about one mile from the city of Hamilton. Some seven hundred children have already been sent to this Home, and from it have obtained a new start in life.

TO E. D—.

MONTREAL, June 2nd, 1872.

"This is a great festival here, the festival of *Corpus Christi*, and Romanism is abroad in all its pomp and pageantry. . . . We were in Cobourg from Monday to Wednesday. The Convocation was held on Tuesday, and I regret to say that an evil which for four years I have dreaded and escaped, came upon me in such a form that I was constrained to fall a victim to it. The Senate of the University insisted upon conferring the degree of LL.D., the highest in its gift, on the classical tutor, the president of the College, and *me*. I resisted almost to the point of offensiveness. I felt that it would be unbecoming to refuse finally, so that I am actually 'doctored,' whether I will or no." *

". . . On Wednesday the Conference begins . . . we shall have many things that may arouse feeling and that will demand greater tact and wisdom than I have at command. But I am trying to cast all this connexional burden on the Lord, that He may sustain me and bring out the issue to His glory."

JOURNAL.

"*Tuesday, June 4th.*—We had a rich, ripe sermon from Mr. Wiseman on Sabbath evening, on 'Jesus sat thus on the well,'—full of fine instruction and exquisite touches of nature brought out of the depths of the Word. Then we had the sacrament, which opened heaven. I felt warmly grateful, thoroughly devoted, restfully happy—surely it was an omen for good. And yet I fear I spoke yesterday more severely than I ought, and perhaps wounded the feelings of a very estimable brother. How difficult it is to keep guard over the tongue. . . ."

"*Thursday, June 6th.*—I hardly know how to approach the question of my own departure. Affectionate invitations to stay are pressed on me from every side, and I cannot hide from myself that I have an influence here such as no other man has. Yet I go—have promised to go—and although nervously anxious not to make a providential mistake, believe I shall be led rightly. At any rate, I go from greater power to less, and from larger salary to smaller, so I have the satisfaction of knowing that I am not moved by selfish aims."

* In the course of nearly half a century this degree has been conferred *honoris causâ* only thirteen times by Victoria University. Surely this is no lavish bestowal of honorary degrees by what is, with one exception, we believe, the only Methodist University in the British Empire. And doubtless it would not have been the privilege of a Canadian University to confer this degree, honourable alike to those who gave and to him who took it, had Dr. Punshon belonged to one of the religious bodies in Great Britain who control the Universities of that country.

CHAPTER XV.

1872—1873.

CANADA.—ENGLAND. *Aged 48, 49.*

Journey to the North-West.—Shipwreck.—Visit to Missions in Manitoba.—Japan Mission.—Church Dedication at Baltimore.—Longfellow.—The Mississippi.—New Orleans and the South.—Farewell to Canada.

JOURNAL.

“*June 16th, 1872.*—Praise to God ! May His great name be praised for ever more. The Conference has passed over, and the God who makes men to be of one mind in one house was evidently with us. It has been decidedly the most important of the five Conferences over which I have been honoured to preside. And yet, though there was much difference of opinion, there was substantial unity at last, and brotherly love throughout. Questions of difficulty were satisfactorily solved ; the commutation question amicably settled ; the principle of division of Conferences affirmed ; the way cleared for a union with the Conference of Eastern British America, and, if they so please, with the New Connexion ; and last, not least, it was decided to open a school in the city of Montreal. . . . I speak last in this brief record, of my own pulpit failure ; my morbidness culminated on Sabbath, and I was obliged to ask Mr. Bowman Stephenson to relieve me for a few minutes. Is this an indication of Thy will, O Lord, or a temporary feebleness only ? Not so much depressed about it as I feared I should be. Trying to know His will, that I may do it. Announced that, so far as I could see, I sat in the chair for the last time. A season of deep feelings, exercise, solitudes, hope and pain.”

“*July 7th, 1872.*—Brought back in safety from a visit to the Conference of Eastern British America, where I renewed the acquaintance of four years ago. . . . To-morrow, by God’s blessing, I start for Manitoba on a missionary tour to the Great North-West. I pray to be preserved in journeying and to be enabled to do some good.”

TO MRS. PARKIN.

“WINNIPEG, PROVINCE OF MANITOBA,

“RED RIVER OF THE NORTH, *July 27th, 1872.*

“Does your geography carry you as far as your letter has come? For yours of July 5th has reached me here in this far North-West, one thousand miles from Toronto, where I have come on a missionary tour—the missionaries of the Saskatchewan district having travelled nearly the same distance to meet me and my companions. Perhaps you may have heard that I have been in perils oft during the journey. Annie and Morley came with me to the head of Lake Superior, and then returned.

“We left Toronto on July 8th, and travelled to Sarnia by rail. A train off the track ahead detained us two hours—incident the first. Embarked on board the steamer *Manitoba*, called at Goderich, Southampton, Bruce Miner, all on Lake Huron, passed through the St. Mary's river, and about 6 p.m. on the 11th went through the canal at Sault St. Marie, which separates Lake Huron from Lake Superior. A great wall of fog met us as we entered the latter, the most enormous basin of fresh water in the world, unless Lake Nyanza shall be proved larger. We toiled through the fog all night. About 1 p.m. on Thursday the 12th, I was standing on the fore deck, the fog dense and heavy, and the captain said to me. ‘We are going along like a pig in a poke.’ ‘More intelligently than a pig, I hope,’ was my reply, ‘for you know where you are going.’ ‘Oh, yes,’ was his answer. The fog was coming down heavily, so I retired into the saloon. Not two minutes after I saw the captain rush frantically to the alarm bell and reverse the engines. At that moment the fog lifted, and there was a desolate coast close upon us, towards which we were driving at the rate of six miles an hour. Two seconds only, as it seemed of agonising suspense and the ship struck with a tremendous concussion, smashing crockery, glasses, doors, etc., flinging ladies down upon the floor, and causing, as you may suppose, immense consternation. For a moment the scene was terrible; happily there was no rebound, and the vessel remained hard and fast upon the rocks. We found by-and-by we were on an island which was uninhabited, save at one end of it, some fifteen miles distant from the scene of our shipwreck. We all (one hundred and fifty) landed, made fires on the beach, or rather on the rocks, found out lovely beaches, covered with the most exquisite quartz, spar, agates and amethysts, and so spent the day, the captain trying all manner of ways to get the boat off. At 11 a.m. next morning a sail was descried, which turned out to be the steamer *Cumberland* bound for the same port as ourselves. She bore down to our rescue, and stayed with us for thirty hours in vain efforts to dislodge us. At length, on Saturday at about 6 p.m., the *Manitoba* was pulled off the rocks, but alas, only to fill with water; so she was beached in about twelve feet of water, and all the passengers

transferred to the *Cumberland*, in which we made the rest of our voyage. Annie was very brave—indeed all the passengers behaved very well. I am deeply grateful for this additional instance of God's providential care, and would give Him all He has given and all He has spared.

“At Duluth, the head of Lake Superior in the State of Minnesota, we took the Northern Pacific railroad, just built and a wonderfully dangerous affair, to Moorehead, a small place of 500 people, founded last September, in which already every second house is a dance house, a gaming house, or a saloon, where a decent woman is a rarity, where oaths are the currency of the place, and where to use their own language, ‘it is a dull day that goes over without a shootin,’ that is, not of game, but of *man*. I never saw such a Sodom as Moorehead. We took steamer on the Red River, and until we got to Pembina, 150 miles from this, had the State of Minnesota on the one hand, and the Territory of Dakota on the other, and in the 600 miles, we did not see two hundred houses. At Pembina we re-entered the British territory, and came into this new Canadian province of Manitoba. To-morrow morning I preach and conduct the first ordination service ever held by our Church in the North-West ! ! ”

TO HIS DAUGHTER.

“DULUTH, MINNESOTA, *August 4th*, 1872.

“However, we reached Fort Garry at last, and had a pleasant time there ; saw lots of Indians, interviewed and dined with Governor Archibald, did *not* see Riel or Bishop Tache ; saw the spot where Scott was murdered ; had a two days' conference with the missionaries, who were all present but one, and he (Sinclair) appeared before we came away ; suggested, counselled, made peace ; preached, ordained John McDougall, held a missionary meeting, administered the sacrament, visited the Presbyterian minister, was visited by an Archdeacon and a *confrère* of the inferior clergy, lectured twice, went up to the residence of the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, saw owls, and hawks, and buzzards, and three or four bald old eagles ; came up to Frog Point by steamer, and thence to Moorehead by stage, and had to be transhipped on the railroad yesterday at a place where the road had suddenly gone down six feet, the engine and car gracefully disappearing from sight ! I am here, resting on the Sabbath, thankful for preserving mercy, and for a fair share of health, and for the means of grace, and the blessed sacrament, and for the chance which I hope to have to-night of testifying for my Master. By the way, young lady, I would have you know that you have an *Indian* father. I am adopted into the Cree tribe of Indians, and have received the name of ‘Wau-bu-nu-tiik,’ which being interpreted means ‘The spirit of the morning.’ I trust our visit has done good. I have been much struck with the self-denial and earnestness of the missionaries, and with

the vastness of the field they have to cultivate, especially in the great Saskatchewan country.

Some of the missionaries had come from 1,000 miles west to be with us. We gathered the whole nine or ten from each station, and had a blessed little Conference. One of them even had not seen a railway for twelve years. I felt so dwarfed in their presence. These are the true heroes of the Lord's host. I felt it almost presumption to assume any official position, and to counsel and question them; I would gladly have sat at their feet. We spent two days in close converse about the work, its anxieties, prospects, dangers, openings, etc. . . ."

To E. D—.

"COBOURG, *September 5th, 1872.*

"I have had a sight of new beauties this week. Some of the scenery in the Muskoka district is exceedingly lovely, and on Monday the M.P. for the district placed a steamer at my disposal, and I with a party of friends spent the day on the Lakes, Lake Muskoka, Lake Rosseau, and Lake Joseph, all of the loveliest type of Scotch scenery, with little dots of islands, amounting to nearly a thousand, and varying in size from twenty yards to three miles. We returned to Bracebridge at night, and I lectured there, and preached on Tuesday at an Indian camp-meeting at Rama, listening afterwards to an Indian sermon and prayer-meeting, with five large blazing fires built on platforms of wood. There were about four hundred Indians present and they seemed very earnest and lively. I preached, of course through an interpreter. There are five local preachers at Rama, of the names respectively of Joseph Benson, Isaac Yellowhead, William Quake, Jacob Shilling and William Bigwind, and the platform at the camp ground was put up by Isaac Rocky Mountain, and the sermon preached by James Big Canoe. It is very interesting to be amongst these children of the forest, keeping their feast of Tabernacles."

To THE REV. W. O. BOOTH.

"MONTREAL, *October 21st, 1872.*

"Since May I have indeed been busy and I have had no leisure time. First came the General Conference. . . . Then came our own Conference, which was a most trying and important one. Then the Eastern Conference in Halifax, where I supplied Wiseman's lack of service. Then the missionary visit to Manitoba, with its shipwreck and mosquito troubles. Then a second missionary tour into Muskoka—the part of Ontario that is outlying and but recently colonised; and then three weeks ago I was pitched out of a carriage and bruised and shaken heavily, and my whole nervous system unstrung. With all this I have had to preside over three important committees—one to confer with the representatives of the New Connexion on Methodist union; one our own Missionary Committee which

is now composed of some eighty members, and distributes all the appropriations once a year ; and the last, which is now in session in this city, a committee on the division of Conference ; and to meet the representatives of the Eastern B.A. Conference with a view to a federal union. . . . We are now discussing whether there shall be a General Superintendent in the General Conference, or whether there shall be Presidents of Annual Conferences who shall have co-ordinate authority and preside over the General Conference in turn. We are likely to split on it ; as some of us, myself included, will have nothing to do with the creation of a body without a head.

"*October 22nd.*—We have tided over the difficulty. They have adopted a suggestion of mine, that there shall be three General Superintendents holding office from one General Conference to another.

JOURNAL.

"*November 10th, 1872.*—Our Missionary Committee held in Brockville, was marked by a good spirit and an increased sympathy with the missionary cause, and a determination arrived at, on the whole with wonderful unanimity, to commence a mission in Japan. I thank God for this decision. I find that when I commit these matters to His hand, bringing all the wisdom and power I can muster to the advocacy of what I believe to be right, He either strangely makes men to be of one mind in one house, or gives me to feel that what I have not advocated is on the whole the best. I think He has taught me also the secret of waiting, knowing that thought is like seed, and it requires time to germinate, and is sometimes slow of growth. . . ."

TO MISS P—.

"BALTIMORE, U.S., *November 25th, 1872.*

" . . . If the Conferences have only grace to accept the recommendations of the Committee, I shall have been privileged to help forward schemes whose issues may stretch into the future further than human sagacity can foresee. . . .

"I dedicated a church here yesterday which cost \$400,000, or £80,000. It is very beautiful, but I like my own church better, though built at about a third of the cost. The Sunday School-room, however, is the most perfect I ever saw. It is nearly sixty feet high, and will hold about four hundred children. At one end is a beautiful organ, in front of which, on a raised dais, is the superintendent's desk. . . . The walls will be hung with pictures, the floor is all carpeted, in the centre a fountain plays. The windows are of stained glass. There is a gallery at one end. Underneath this, with sliding doors, is the infant class-room. In the gallery are three beautiful rooms, two for Bible-classes, and one for the library fitted up with shelves, with a separate compartment for each book. The general effect is marvellously beautiful."

To E. D—.

“STANSTEAD, PROVINCE OF QUEBEC, *December 1st, 1872.*

“ . . . I had a very tedious journey yesterday from Boston, not arriving, in consequence of heavy snows and train off the track in front of us, until nearly midnight, so I had only poor preparation for this morning's labour. I have needed comfort sorely, for the dread of another trouble is upon me. Fanny is the subject of great and grave concern. She has been ill now for a month past. . . . It is possible that my fears magnify the reality, and I may find her, week after week, much better. God grant it may be so. ‘My one little ewe lamb,’ although she is sheltered in another fold.”

“*Monday, December 2nd.*—But for my anxiety about Fanny my tour would have been a very pleasant one. When we left Toronto on Monday morning it was quite fine, but before we reached Niagara we were in a blinding snowstorm. On Tuesday night we reached Ithaca, very beautifully situated at the foot of Cayuga Lake; thence we made our way to Albany, and thence to New York. On Saturday we travelled down to Baltimore, where on the Sabbath I dedicated the church of which they wished me to become pastor, with a salary of \$5,000 per annum, six weeks' vacation, and an elegantly furnished house. The church is one of the costliest in the States and has cost \$400,000, or £80,000. The interior is rather dark but very fine. . . . The people, moreover, are very kind, and more heartily Methodistical than many in the States, so you see I am giving up £700 a year to come home. We returned from Baltimore to New York on Monday, and on Tuesday evening my friend Mr. E—, who has recently taken to himself a wife, had his wedding reception, to which five hundred guests were invited! Happily it was wet, so only about two hundred came. . . . I lectured in Boston on Thanksgiving night, much to the detriment of my audience, who would, I dare say, rather have been at their family reunions. During my stay in Boston we went through the burnt district. Oh, what a sight! Fancy sixty acres of what a while ago was a flourishing city, in ruins! It did not seem, however, to interfere with the elasticity of the people. They are wonderful pieces of human India-rubber.”

To M. F—.

“On Friday we took a drive to Cambridge, where is Harvard University, and the beautiful Mount Auburn Cemetery. The rain prevented our great enjoyment, so we resolved to make the best of it; and if we could not have the pleasure of exquisite scenery, we determined for once in our lives to be impudent, and see if we could not make our lives memorable, so on the strength of a letter of introduction, and after a sturdy bombardment of several houses which were not what we wanted, we found ourselves in

the grounds of an old-fashioned house in which General Washington once lived, and which is now the fitting residence of H. W. Longfellow. We sent in cards and asked if Mr. Longfellow was at home, and would receive us. The answer was in the affirmative, so in we went. We were met almost on the threshold by the poet himself, with a glorious head, and hair and beard as white as snow. And there in Longfellow's own study, a fit lair for such a genius, with everything antique—busts, pictures, book-cases, and a hundred-year-old fireplace—we sat chatting for half an hour."

TO HIS DAUGHTER.

"STANSTEAD, *December 1st, 1872.*

"As I find it will take some days to get a letter from here to Cobourg, I take the opportunity of the quiet Sabbath afternoon to offer you, fresh and warm from a father's heart, birthday wishes and greeting which would fain ask for you 'abundance of peace' for many years yet, if such be the Father's will. You have been always on my mind, and much in my prayers, since I saw you. I have supplicated submissively, and yet with an earnestness which I hope is not unwarranted, for returning strength and long life, and many blessings for you after this loving purification of the Father's has done its work of healing. It has been a struggle for me to keep my mind free from painful solicitude about you, but I have been for the most part enabled to commit you wholly to the Saviour's care. . . .

"God send his good angels to guard and bless thee, my child. From the weary morning in December 1850—until now, when *your* child is dear to me, I have never ceased to cherish you in my heart of hearts; and I do not cease now, although you have a happy home of your own. May God bless it to you and keep you to it for many years. If my heart could go out upon the paper, it would burn. Again God bless my darling child."

TO MRS. PARKIN.

"COBOURG, *December 11th, 1872.*

"As I grow older I seem to cling more tenaciously to the friends of youth, and those especially who have been proved by time, and are hallowed to me by congeniality of spiritual feeling. . . . I find on examination that we have in Canada 100 more ministers and 900 more members in Church fellowship than when I came, and the increase in the value of connexional property has been very large. Then we received £1,000 from the Home Committee. Now we are independent of financial help, and our increase in missionary contributions has been this year \$10,000 or £2,000. Thank God for such a record. . . . It will be a pang for me to leave Canada. It will always be endeared to me by memories of joy and sorrow, of usefulness and solicitude, and I have made many friendships here which will abide."

JOURNAL.

"*December 26th, 1872.*—Brought safely to another Christmas Day. Entering into the spirit of the blessed Advent, and feel my heart overflowing with gratitude, and with desire for that mind, 'which was also in Christ Jesus.' My daughter a little better. Lord, undertake for her and for us."

To E. D——.

"*December 26th, 1872.*

"Christmas Day has come and gone, and in spite of all drawbacks was a happy one. Old fashioned indeed it was, for it was snowing furiously all day, and as we look out this morning there are three feet of snow on the level. The last few days have been bitterly cold, and, so far, against Fanny; but she was able to be up and dressed yesterday, and does not seem much worse for it—this morning baby was the heroine as far as presents went, and was set down on the programme to 'pat-a-cake' for our special benefit. My heart overflowed with gratitude, and I seemed able to trust, without misgiving, all my fortunes and destinies for both worlds in my loving Father's hands.

JOURNAL.

"*December 27th, 1872.*—The last Sabbath of the Old Year! nearer to the bourne than ever before. Had a season of strange depression and conflict this morning. Fanny very ill, my own symptoms equivocal, the pulpit trouble increasing to a dread. Home and Church anxieties, and the chronic unbelief of my own heart, all seemed to master me, and in a very agony I cast myself on the promises, and was soothed and comforted. How little the multitudes who witness my public appearances know of my private conflicts, or can imagine my faint-heartedness and sorrow. I am brave for others, for them my faith never wavers, but for myself, I feel it hard to trust always. . . . 'Lord increase my faith.' It is the prayer of the years, answer it fully and soon."

To MRS. G——.

"*TORONTO, January 8th, 1873.*

"I am beginning to feel, now that 1873 has actually arrived, that the time of my separation from Canada nears apace. I am wonderfully attached to this place and people. If I had come here a few years earlier, or before I had struck roots at home, I could gladly have made a permanent home in this fair, free, forest land,—as I believe the freest land on earth."

JOURNAL.

"*February 2nd, 1873.*—Much in travel through exceedingly severe weather, but preserved in the providence of God. Enabled, though with intervals of languor, to keep my consecration. Dr. and Mrs. Palmer have been labouring in Toronto, much to the quickening of the Church, and the

conversion of sinners—wherein I greatly rejoice. Although I cannot fully enter into their modes of working, I have taken myself to task in this matter, and have asked whether it is not that I live on a lower plain than they. It may be so ; but while I would in all humility confess unfaithfulness, I cannot see as they see, nor read the Scriptures about holiness as they interpret them. God forbid, however, that I should fail to be glad in their success."

TO HIS NIECE.

"February 14th, 1873.

"Let us all trust more, dear lassie, and brood less, sing more and sorrow less, work more and worry less. And Jesus, to whom we tell all our griefs and cares, will bear our burdens or strengthen our backs—it does not matter which—for in either case we shall do well. I fear I can preach better than practice, but I am looking and longing for more faith."

TO HIS DAUGHTER.

"MISSISSIPPI RIVER, MEMPHIS, TENN., February 20th, 1873.

"I saw a genuine 'plantation' for the first time yesterday. The owner's house, the negroes' cabins, the fields, the barns, the stables, and the big bell in the centre which summoned the hands to work. The scene on the *levée* here is unusually stirring and interesting. Thousands of bales of cotton and barrels of sugar—large steamers (the saloon of the one I am in is nearly twice as long as the Metropolitan Church)—hundreds of negroes, their white teeth glittering as they flash out frequent laughter, in contrast to the sable of all the rest of them—the jargon of strange sounds, the shouting, chaffing, swearing, dancing, fighting, hurrying and scurrying, make up a scene, the like of which I never saw before. I have just seen a young negress, rainbowed in the following fashion: *black* bonnet, dark *red* rose, trailing sprig of ivy, *brown* veil, *brown* print dress, *white* feather, *white* petticoat, elaborately displayed, *blue* bracelets, and bright *red* shawl, and bright *green* gloves. . . .

"The water we wash in here is the colour and consistency of pea-soup rather strongly mixed, *before* we use it, and afterwards resembles lamp-black oil."

TO HIS NIECE.

"February 21st, 1873.

"How can a man write, with the tremulous motion of the vessel, and with a masquerade ball going on in the saloon hard by—where a lot of men and girls are fooling themselves in sheets and pillow cases, and horrible masks, to while away the time? . . . It has been a brilliant day. The sun has shone clear and splendid, but the air has been keen and cold, although so far south. There is nothing specially beautiful in the scenery. It is not half so beautiful as the St. Lawrence, but

it is a magnificent river notwithstanding. . . . We have passed interminable forests of cotton-wood and cane-brake, where the fugitive slaves used to hide, and out of which they were hunted with blood-hounds. We have also passed numbers of plantations, now for the most part forsaken, but some of them languishing out an existence still. The negroes have for the most part gone north to better their condition."

To M. F——.

"NEW ORLEANS, *February 25th*, 1873.

"It is the festival of *Mardi-Gras*—the last day before Lent. . . . The morning is dull and cloudy, an English February morning, but the people are already astir. It is computed that there are twenty-five thousand strangers in the city. All the hotels are full, even to the last settee, and they are chartering berths in steamers which are lying at anchor in the river. New Orleans has the finest river front in the world. Its broad and fine *levée* extends for fourteen miles, and it is not uncommon to see a thousand or fifteen hundred steamers lying there together, most of them cotton-laden. The streets are very wide. Superb magnolias are in front of the principal houses, and here and there we came upon orange trees laden with last year's fruit. The peach and plum trees are one mass of blossom. . . . Our vessel arrived at midnight on Sunday, and I preached in the saloon on Sabbath morning to the gayest company I have seen, who had danced until midnight on Saturday evening. When they knew I was here they promptly put a notice in the evening papers, and I preached last night again to some seven hundred people. I am treated with warm Southern hospitality by a gentleman whom I never saw before, but to whom I had a note of introduction. Otherwise we should have been exceedingly uncomfortable at this crowded time."

"MOBILE, ALABAMA, *February 26th*, 1873.

"Another stage on our journey is reached, and we are now on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico. . . . Yesterday was a very exciting and marvellous day; such a sight I never saw and I suppose I shall never care to see again. The procession of maskers in the daytime was an hour long, and comprised some of the most ridiculous and hideous masks you can conceive. The night procession was exceedingly ingenious. It was a covert satire upon Darwin's theory of the man developing upward from the monkey and so on. And there were, I suppose a hundred masks representing all the orders of animated creation, from the Zoophyte to the gorilla, and by wonderful ingenuity, each seemed to be sprouting into a higher development; and, moreover, in many of them there was a satire upon prominent characters among men. Thus you could see the

fox, the mole, the butterfly, the tiger, the bear, the snail, the serpent, as they stood on the sidewalk, and gazed all unconscious at their own exaggerated likenesses. It was worth seeing once at any rate, and I don't regret that I have seen a New Orleans Carnival." . . .

TO HIS DAUGHTER.

"SAVANNAH, GEORGIA, *March 1st, 1873.*

"I was so delighted this morning to get news of you by the receipt of your letters of the 18th and 19th. The fellow in the post office said there was no letter for me ; I happened to see Annie's handwriting and so corrected him at once, but even then I did not get yours, and Mrs. Massey brought it to me, with a later one of Annie's, a few moments afterwards. Ah, these Southern people of the lower class are so inexorably stupid, I am troubled with a chronic desire to punch their heads ; which is hardly consistent with a high state of grace. Everything here is wofully inferior, and the people are exacting, extortionate and lazy—though politer than the Northerners by far. . . . We have been a fine drive this morning—fine for this country, that is—to Bonaventure cemetery, in which nature has hung the drapery of mourning. There are long avenues of large oak trees, each branch of which has pendants of Spanish moss. The effect in a cemetery is indescribably solemn and appropriate. I am to preach here to-morrow—so I follow, you see, in the footsteps of John Wesley, '*haud passibus æquis.*' . . . We saw an oak under which he preached, and which is still called Wesley's oak, and a spring where he was wont to slake his thirst, which is still called Wesley's spring.

TO HIS DAUGHTER.

"ST. JOHN RIVER, FLORIDA, *March 5th, 1873.*

"We are shivering with cold down here. That venerable person, the oldest inhabitant, is said never to have known so cold a night in Florida as last night. . . . Fancy frost in the air at St. Augustine with the trees all laden with oranges. . . . There is a large mill at Jacksonville, and the other day three-fourths of the men sent word they could not possibly come to work on account of the cold weather, the thermometer standing at about 40° above zero !!!"

JOURNAL.

"*March 16th, 1872.*—By the good providence of God, brought home in safety after a month's absence. I have been through the Southern States, and have been interested to see what is left of the old slave life and plantation system. . . . On the whole have had less dissipation and more conscious waiting on God during this journey than usual."

TO MRS. T. F. C. M——.

“TORONTO, *March 25th*, 1873.

“I had a month's tour in the Southern States. There is no special beauty in the scenery, but it is a journey necessary to complete one's geographical education, and make one acquainted with Southern habits and customs, and with the inner life of the negro population. I finished up my tour by addressing a few counsels to the President of the United States, who was in the congregation to which I preached in Washington. Since I came home I have begun to be grievously unsettled, and the unsettlement will continue until the time of my departure from Canada. . . I am so glad dear Mr. Hirst is coming out. I hope he will enjoy his visit, though he comes at a very awkward season of the year. Canada never looks so bad as in the months of March and April.”

TO M. F——.

“NEW YORK, *April 20th*, 1873.

“It is the blessed Sabbath and I have preached in St. Paul's, dwelling on our Lord's ascension as the complement of His resurrection and the completion of His work and triumph. Mr. Hirst, who sits opposite me writing to dear Gervase, says I preached richly and blessedly, but then you know he is partial. If I had any freedom the glory is to the Lord. I am humbled almost to pain, when I think of the influence which God has given me in this country. . . . This afternoon we have been into Dr. Tyng's Episcopal Church, where some two thousand children were gathered for their Easter jubilee. To-night we are hoping to cross to Brooklyn to hear Henry Ward Beecher.”

“*April 21st.*—We heard Henry Ward Beecher last night. The sermon was characteristic, and the singing full of heart. We were introduced to him afterwards. When he heard I was returning to England, he said, ‘Well isn't this a pretty good enough country to live in?’ I had a most flattering offer forwarded to me on Saturday, asking if my services could be secured for a chair in Moral Philosophy in the Toronto University!! This would give me a settlement, an influence over young men, a position of honour, and about \$2,400 a year.”

TO JOHN MACDONALD, ESQ., TORONTO.

“NEW YORK, *April 9th*, 1873.

“MY DEAR SIR,—I arrived here yesterday and found your letter with a communication from Mr. Mowat of a deeply interesting character. I am very sensible of the honour conferred upon me by the suggestion, indeed I have rarely felt anything so flattering, and, under some circumstances, the position would be congenial, however unworthy I might feel

myself to fill it. My thoughts upon the subject, however, do not lead me to the conclusion that I am justified in altering, not my *plans*, for I have none, but the arrangements which seem to be marked out for me. . . . It will, I think, occur to you on reflection, that, if there were no other reason, the relations in which I and our Church stand to Victoria College, and the apparent disloyalty to its interests which my acceptance of such a position would entail, would be fatal to the proposition."

To E. D——.

"TORONTO, *May 8th*, 1873.

"Yesterday was a solemn and interesting day. In the morning we had a valedictory service, over which I presided, to bid farewell to the first Methodist missionaries sent out by the Canadian Church to Japan. Five years ago, my first official act in Toronto was at a valedictory to the men who were starting for the North-West. My last official act is therefore in the true succession. I thank God that I have lived to see this day, and that He has honoured me by making me in any way instrumental in bringing it about. . . . In the evening our beautiful church was filled to overflowing, while we had the Bible meeting. Mr. Hirst has thoroughly enjoyed some of these services. It is a great comfort to have him here just now. He is a wise and cheerful friend, and as true as steel.

"Thank God for helpful friends—without them life would be desolate indeed. . . . The pangs of parting have already begun, and they are hard to bear."

CLOSING WORDS OF LAST SERMON PREACHED IN METROPOLITAN CHURCH,
TORONTO, MAY 11TH, 1873.

"The long bond which has united us is now of necessity loosened. From other lips you will listen to the words of eternal life. Our interest in each other, fresh and vivid and hearty now, will become by a law that is common, and of which therefore we may not complain, fainter and fainter, until down the corridors of memory we must gaze, to recall with an effort the names and circumstances that are so familiar to-day, but deeply in a heart that does not soon nor readily forget will be graven in distinctest lettering, the name of this House of Prayer, and of the congregation that has gathered within its walls. . . . There are prophets who predict your halting,—there are I fear malignants who would rejoice in it. Be it yours to prove the prophets false ones, be it yours to have over the malignants the nobility of a Gospel revenge. As the fathers die, let the children be baptised for the dead, and by a bright succession of manly and intelligent piety prevent the burial ground from becoming richer than the Church."

TO M. F——.

“TORONTO, *May 2nd*, 1873.

“About three hundred people assembled last night to do honour to poor unworthy me. An illuminated address was presented, and an exquisite casket composed entirely of Canadian woods of seven different kinds, and mounted with clasps and plate of solid silver. It enclosed a deposit receipt to my credit for \$4,000 dollars or £800 sterling. I failed lamentably in my speech. Everybody else did well. I managed, however, to say that I accepted the money on the condition that it should be invested in Canada, that I should draw the interest, and the principal at my death should revert to the Canadian Conference, with the expression of a preference on my part that it should be applied for the benefit of the Worn-out Ministers' Fund.”

TO HIS DAUGHTER.

“MONTREAL, *May 22nd*, 1873.

“We had a pleasant sail, and Mr. Hirst thoroughly enjoyed the Thousand Islands and the Rapids. At Kingston I had to undergo the ordeal of a deputation and an address. At Brockville the District Meeting adjourned to the wharf, and I was addressed by the chairman—oh, these partings! Why should we have to say farewell! There is a place, thank God, where it is never spoken. . . . I have thanked God many a time for the courage He gave you when that never-to-be-forgotten parting came. I trust He is sustaining you still. Ceaseless prayers will rise every day, and almost every hour, for grace and abundant strength and peace, and even yet for healing, if it shall be His will.”

On the 24th of May, Dr. Punshon sailed from Quebec in the S.S. *Sarmatian*, and on the 3rd of June, 1873, he landed in Liverpool.

CHAPTER XVI.

1873—1875.

LONDON, KENSINGTON. Aged 49 to 51.

Once more in England.—Death of his Daughter.—Appointed to Kensington.—Uphill Work.—Visits Rome and Naples.—Work in Circuit and District.—President of the Conference 1874.—Labours of the Year.—Letters and Journal.—Conference of 1875.—Ordination Charge.—Appointed Missionary Secretary.—At the Mission House.

THUS after an absence of five years, broken only by a brief visit to England in 1871, was Dr. Punshon once more in his native land, eager to resume his citizenship of the England within the seas. Not that he slighted or disparaged that portion of Greater Britain where his lot had recently been cast. His imagination had been moved by its vastness. He took delight in its noble rivers, its extensive forests, its fertile plains. His sympathies had been stirred and quickened in the midst of vigorous national life, rejoicing in its youth and abounding in hope; while, as a Christian, and a minister of the gospel, his whole soul had responded to the great opportunities afforded for founding and extending Christian Churches, to possess the land and inherit the future. And the ties of personal friendship formed in Canada had come to be both numerous and strong. Moreover his position

there was one of great distinction and commanding influence. English Methodism could offer him nothing to compare with it. In this old and crowded country, with its rigid social barriers, and the deep gulf that divides the Established Church from Non-conformists, his course must be in many respects cramped and limited in comparison with that which was open to him in British North America. It might well have been with him as with others who have made the experiment, that he would have found it impossible to take up again with life and ministry in the old country.

Most of the considerations named were felt by him ; but there was one that outweighed them all. His love of England was a passion that many waters could not quench. Permanent residence elsewhere was exile, and if that was to be his lot it must be by unmistakable appointment of God. Nothing less than the settling of the pillar of cloud in the west could convince him that he must continue to dwell there, when from within and from without he felt himself drawn irresistibly to his native land. He had gone to Canada too late for naturalization there. The roots of his life were deep in English soil, and could not be transplanted.

By the Methodists in England generally his return was eagerly looked for. By the vast majority of his brethren in the ministry also he was warmly welcomed. Possibly there were a few who thought it might have been better for him to remain in Canada, to develop and direct the work over which he had presided, and who did not quite see what position in the Church at home he could appropriately occupy, after the

exceptional position he had enjoyed for some years. Nor was he quite clear in his own mind on the subject. He doubted whether his health was equal to the regular round of "circuit work," while there was no other work for which he could stipulate, or which seemed likely to present itself. But for this he was prepared to trust Providence, and in doing so to wait for the shaping of circumstances and the judgment of the Conference.

JOURNAL.

"*September 28th, 1873.*—A long season of silence . . . the record must be crowded with the memories of joy and sorrow. Sustained through the scenes of parting with my Canadian friends, and from my dear suffering child. . . . The voyage one of mercy. Saw God's wonders in the deep, sixty icebergs being visible at one time when off Cape Race, and through them at nightfall we had to wend our perilous way. Eight large whales were spouting at the same time in our neighbourhood. Sighted land on Monday, June 2nd, and on Tuesday was welcomed by my dear friend Gervase Smith. Mr. Hirst visited me in Canada, and was my companion home.

"On June 10th I preached in City Road, London, on behalf of Westminster Chapel, when the collection was £2,079. On the 17th June, by the good providence of God, was permitted to rebuild my home, and was married by my friend Gervase Smith to dear Mary Foster, the friend of many years, and of the dead. For this great mercy I desire to render thanks to a merciful God.

"Went to Newcastle, to be present at the Conference. On the first day of the session I received the tidings that the stroke had fallen, and that my only daughter slept in Jesus on the 18th of July. . . . I had much sympathy and many prayers. How much chastening my stubborn spirit needs! The Lord will not suffer me to set my affections on the earth, but weans me by repeated chastenings. Oh! that I were more docile. Fanny's utterances of trust were assuring, and she rests, I know she rests, with the gone-before. While I mourn for myself, and for dear Alfred, thus early widowed, I rejoice for her, 'thus early crowned and blest.'

"I was received with generous and hearty kindness by my brethren, and thanked God for the home feeling with which He inspired me. I was pleased with the spirit of the Conference. There was a manly independence, with an almost unruffled brotherliness of feeling, and the deliberations—I use the word advisedly in regard to the major part of the

proceedings—were well and wisely conducted. The discussions of the ‘Stations,’ as aforetime, boisterous and painful. I had determined not to say or do anything affecting my own appointment, and when I was finally put down for Kensington, was disposed to accept it as from God. Here, therefore, I am settled for the present, in a ‘Circuit’ which has but one place of worship. The prospect is forlorn enough, so far as the Society is concerned. There are but eighty-three members, and when I came there were but seven entire pews let in the chapel. The Conference has kindly granted me an assistant, and I enter on the work of a Circuit again with an earnest purpose to devote myself fully to Christ, and to labour for the salvation of souls. I am also appointed Chairman of the 2nd London District.

To E. D—.

“August 17th, 1873.

“You will see that the Conference has given me charge of a London district. Dr. Osborn calls it the grandest diocese I ever had, and says I need not ‘beat my wings against such a cage.’ I shall need much grace, the full concentration of time and thought on my work, and, if it please God, health and freedom from mental and nervous exhaustion, if I am to accomplish anything. I am going in the strength of the Lord.

“My Conference reception has been all that I could have wished. It has been generous and cordial, and I can hardly doubt that the brethren or most of them, are glad to see me. This has assured me somewhat, though I feel it is still an experiment whether I can succeed in Circuit work. My pulpit trouble was on me sorely this morning. . . . I take refuge here, however, that if God appoints the work He gives the strength, and as I have left the appointment absolutely in His hands, I may safely leave all the rest.”

The sermon preached in City Road Chapel in aid of the liquidation of the Westminster Chapel debt produced remarkable financial results, as has been seen. It was a discourse that he had preached in connection with the dedication of the Metropolitan Church, Toronto, and was founded upon Psalm cxxxii. 8, 9, “Arise, O Lord, into Thy rest; Thou and the ark of Thy strength. Let Thy priests be clothed with righteousness, and let Thy saints shout for joy.” The old chapel in City Road was filled on the Tuesday afternoon, and the collection amounted to £2,079,

the largest ever made in a Methodist chapel in England. The sermon is No. 26 in the second series of his published sermons.

No change could have been more complete than that from his wide-roving, general superintendency in Canada, to the charge of the single station at Kensington newly detached from the Bayswater Circuit, itself, it should be remembered, the product of his labours between 1868 and 1871. It was naturally hoped that he would be able to do at Warwick Gardens Chapel, Kensington, what he had formerly done at Denbigh Road Chapel, Bayswater. If these hopes were not fully realised,—and, in spite of the proverb, history seldom does repeat itself,—the reasons are not far to seek. A dozen years of arduous and exhausting labour had done something to diminish, if not the quality, at least the quantity of work of which he was capable. It was now impossible for him to preach more than once in a day. Tasks once lightly undertaken and easily discharged he could no longer attempt. Nor were the conditions of work in Kensington nearly so favourable as they had been in Bayswater. The neighbourhood, the character of the population, the prevailing influences social and religious, were not such as to facilitate the work of Methodism. Moreover, but two years of his ministry were given to Kensington as compared with the three that were devoted to Bayswater, and during the second of these his public duties interfered in a wholly exceptional manner with his home-labours. These things being borne in mind, the success of this period of Dr. Punshon's ministry must be pronounced both real in character and considerable in extent.

Some little time elapsed before Dr. Punshon was settled at Kensington. The little flock of which he had become the pastor were willing, even beyond their power, to provide for his comfort. A good house in Holland Road was taken, and furnished, and thither arrived in due course his effects from Canada, not without breakage, and mishap of various kinds. By the middle of September he was fairly housed, and he had once more "local habitation" as well as "name" in English Methodism. His assistant, the Rev. W. Milburn Briggs, proved admirably efficient in his somewhat difficult position, possessing at once the esteem of the people and the confidence and affection of his superintendent. He was now within reach of many old friends, and resumed an intercourse which had been one of his chief sources of happiness in former days. Two of these, Mrs. Brames Hall and Mr. Greaves Walker, belonged to the circuit, and resided near him.

Whenever he preached at Warwick Gardens the congregation was large, but no one knew better than himself how much and how little that availed towards the work he had at heart. It was one thing to attract Sunday by Sunday an ever-changing succession of strangers, of people from the country, and of those Sunday-wanderers, who, having heard Cardinal Manning, Mr. Spurgeon, and Canon Liddon, wished to hear Punshon also, and to compass these ends would fly from one end of London to another. But it was another thing to mould a congregation, and to build up a Church. To this his efforts were constantly directed, and the work grew in his hands. Beneath the crowding, the hurry, the coming and

going of many, the regular hearers steadily increased, and the little fellowship of Church members rose in number quarter by quarter.

TO MR. REYNAR.

"September 2nd, 1873.

"It is a somewhat discouraging prospect, but I go with an earnest purpose of consecration and of work. The parish clergyman has three curates and twelve lady sisters of mercy. . . . Monsignor Capel, the Catesby of *Lothair*, is close at hand ; Dr. Stoughton has a well-established Nonconformist congregation, and in my chapel, which will hold a thousand, there are *seven* pews let. I am not therefore to build upon another man's foundation."

"September 24th, 1873.

"I am fairly in harness, though I have no study yet. The first batch of shelves came yesterday. My congregations are good, but the work will be uphill and difficult, to rebuild a living Church out of the valley of bones. I am rebuked, however, as the illustration on which I have unwittingly fallen reminds me that the 'Breath' can do it. . . . A woful breakage! Autograph case plate glass shivered—*cum multis aliis.*"

JOURNAL.

"November 9th, 1873.—Mr. Briggs preached this morning on the way-side hearers, very nicely and profitably. Solemnly searching whether my own heart is callous beneath the tramp of years. Lord, keep my heart soft, and renew my spiritual youth.

"November 16th.—Much in travel. Lectured in Manchester on Tuesday to the largest audience I have seen in England. Much exhausted. Have had reason to judge myself severely on account of hasty words. I am still far from the Master's even mind.

"December 14th.—A week of unintermitting labour. Heard much of the remarkable work of God in Newcastle during a visit there on Tuesday. God has poured out His Spirit there, and in Edinburgh, until, as one says, the ministers, who have never seen the like, 'are like men in a dream.' Preached to-day in my old pulpit at Bayswater, with a crowd of memories rushing like a flood upon my spirit.

"December 28th.—A¹¹ praise to the goodness which has brought me though many vicissitudes to the last Sabbath of another year. 'The servant is above his Lord.' I have a home, friends, a sphere of usefulness, power of work, and light to work in, some acceptance with the people glorified friends linking me with the better land, a living Saviour, a Spirit of Holiness and Power which has not left me to myself, and a resolve to

be wholly the Lord's, with a good hope, through Christ, of being preserved and presented to the Father."

TO THE REV. W. HIRST.

"December 31st, 1873.

"A thousand blessings on you and yours. May the years deal lightly with you, and may your grace and peace abound with each succeeding one.

"My Quarterly Meeting on Monday last—Members 112, increase in quarter, 29. On trial, 24. Income from Society last quarter £12 10s., this quarter £23 5s. Nearly £500 expended on the furniture of the house. All bills paid but one. I hope the Circuit will float in two years.

"We have Dr. Stoughton with us at our watch-night this evening."

JOURNAL.

"February 1st, 1874.—Another week of mercy. Thankful that God has answered prayer in turning aside an unseemly strife that might have been a sad hindrance to our Church here. Poor Emile Cook, who has never recovered the effects of his terrible shipwreck, died at Hyères on Thursday.

"February 8th.—Detained from worship to-night by a very severe cold of the influenza type, which has laid hold of and enfeebled me. A providential deliverance during the week. A serious accident to the Great Western express on Friday. I travelled by the same train on Thursday, and but for the 'accident' of my wife's not being able to accompany me to Torquay, should have been in the train which suffered."

On the 16th of February, accompanied by his wife and Mr. and Mrs. Gervase Smith, Dr. Punshon left home for Italy. He had not previously been further south than Florence, but on this occasion he visited Rome and Naples. His unfailing delight in foreign travel was once more kindled to the full, and perhaps he was more impressed and moved by the sight of Rome than by anything else in the travels of his whole life. The journal which he kept during the journey is almost as copious, and quite as enthusiastic as the earlier ones that have been quoted in these pages.

It was not afterwards transcribed and embellished with photographs as they were, but was written in pencil, hastily enough, but with the customary neatness and legibility.

JOURNAL.

February 21st.—After refreshment we took our first walk in Rome. As I write I can hardly believe that the dream of my life is realised. There was ‘a struggling moonbeam’s misty light,’ by which we threaded our way through infragrant streets to the Colosseum, which we at last reached, and stood in the semi-darkness, under the shadow of centuries, on the site where gladiators had wrestled and died, where emperors sat in state, and knights and senators revelled, where sixty thousand people have gathered to exult over Christian martyrs cast to the lions. We had a hasty peep at the Arch of Constantine and the Arch of Titus in the distance, trode the pathway of the Via Sacra, and returned to our hotel to a much-needed rest.

February 22nd.—I was much amused with a Sunday School class which was being taught in St. Peter’s. A young student was instructing a class of lads on the difference between Catholic and Protestant Sacraments, which he did with great volubility. After he had done; a competitive examination in the catechism began, conducted by the lads against each other. They all stood on a bench, and when one failed to answer a question, he stood down, and the combat was continued till one remained master of the field.”

The record of a single day shall be given in detail, to show at once the zest and energy with which he devoted himself to seeing the Eternal City, and the minuteness with which he reported each day’s occupations.

February 24th.—Went first to the Colosseum, and climbed the steep stair-cases, lost in wonder and awe, and haunted with visions of the ancient world. Thence through the Arch of Titus to the Palace of the Cæsars, where we saw the Temple of Jove and the various rooms of Vespasian’s famous palace, together with the recently discovered fish-pond. It was suggestive to meditate on the mutability of worldly fortune standing thus on the Palatine Hill. From the Palace we went to the Forum with its Basilica, Via Appia, Rostrum, graceful columns, pillar of Phocas, and endless associations. The site of the Lacus Curtius reminded us of

that beautiful fable of patriotism, and the thought of Virginius and his injured daughter could not fail to be present to our minds. A hundred thronging memories came surging up as we stood in this place which history and genius have made sacred. The Temple of Concord, the *Ærarium*, and the Temple of Venus were hard by. Then the fine Arch of Septimius Severus arrested us on our way to the Mamertine Prison, where it is alleged that Peter and Paul were confined, and where Paul baptised the jailor in a fountain which he created upon the spot for the purpose. Up the Capitoline Hill to the Capitol and Tarpeian Rock, now enclosed in a garden and much modernized. Thence to the Museum, full of interesting sculptures, notably the Dying Gladiator, the Antinous, and the Capitoline Venus, also the bronze slab on which Rienzi stood to address the people.

"In the afternoon drove to the Arch of Janus, all that is left of the old temple, which was never closed from the time of Numa to the time of Augustus, when the Prince of Peace came down. Near here also is the Cloaca Maxima, and a small and beautiful arch of Severus. Drove through the gates to the Basilica of S. Paolo, the most superb we have seen, full of costly gilding and marble work, and containing some fine paintings. Back to the Protestant burial ground—very beautiful and interesting. Saw the monument of Shelley, with its 'Cor Cordium,' and the wild refrain,

‘ Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.’

Also the pyramid of Caius Sestius, and the grave of poor Keats, with the words, 'Here lies one whose name was writ in water,' inscribed, as he desired, on his tomb. Many nationalities are represented here, and it is a quiet resting-place. We took note of the Theatre of Marcellus, marked the course of the Tiber, stood under the dome of the Pantheon, saw the tombs of Raphael and Annibal Caracci, remembered the uncompromising nature of Christianity which could not accept a niche in the Pantheon for Jesus, and then ended the day at Mr. Piggott's, where, at eight o'clock, I preached to about a hundred people, glad of the opportunity to declare in the Eternal City the gospel of the grace of God."

From Rome they went to Naples, and enjoyed for ten days or more the hospitality of their kind friends Mr. and Mrs. Shilton, then, and for several years afterwards, residents in Naples, who, to unfailing English heartiness of nature, added thorough ac-

quaintance with all things Italian, and strong sympathy for the people among whom they lived. Under their efficient guidance Dr. Punshon and his friends were at great advantage in seeing the sights of Naples and its wonderful suburbs, ancient and modern. They returned home more than delighted with their journey.

From this time until the Conference in July, Dr. Punshon continued hard at work. His little Circuit developed steadily if not rapidly. His duties as Chairman of the District gave him not unwelcome change of duties from time to time, and found employment for his administrative powers, trained and strengthened as they were by the quasi-governor-generalship he had exercised in Canada. Nor could he altogether deny himself to the Connexion which had learnt for so many years to look to him for a kind of service that few if any but himself could render. He did not now attempt the prodigality of service that characterized his earlier days. For that prodigality he had had to suffer, and would continue to do so while he lived; but his public engagements were still numerous and heavy. The one limitation observed was—not more than a single service on a single day; otherwise, glancing over his lists of engagements, it would be difficult to see that he had set himself any limit at all.

On the 25th March he writes:—

“I am holding quarterly meetings by troops,—Cobham, Kingston, Hampstead, Deptford, Kent Road, my own, Lewes, Eastbourne, all during this week and next. The increase in my own Circuit in the three quarters is 46, with 28 on trial. Better than nothing, and I am thankful.”

The demand upon him for lectures was as great as

ever, and during the first seven months of the year he lectured some thirty times.

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"*April 19th.*—Out in the country, and much in business of every kind connected with the Church. Dear Mr. Bishop, who has been suffering from illness for some time but was reported better, unexpectedly summoned home. Dr. Livingstone's body interred yesterday in Westminster Abbey.

"*April 26th.*—Another week of heavy labours and abundant mercy. Privileged to hear a brave utterance of Catholic Christianity from the lips of the Dean of Canterbury, such an one as I thank God for in these perilous times. Lunched with the Dean of Canterbury and Lord Fitzwalter at the Deanery. Felt much impressed to be in the room where so much of Dean Alford's later work was done.

"*May 10th.*—Much in public during the week. Spoke at three meetings, and lectured in my own chapel on Thursday. The missionary meeting filled with the thought of revival, and pervaded by a gracious spirit which I trust I did not let down. Was much helped, though absolutely *frightened* before my speech. Sat also in committee on very important matters, one affecting our service of song, and the other the status of communicants in our Church. It was stated in the discussion that the objections to class meetings arose entirely from the less spiritual among our members and *ministers*. I would humbly ask myself whether this is true of me. I have the conviction that we lose ministerial influence over thousands who are ours by right, by preference, and who have at any rate some good thing in them, by insisting in all cases upon meeting in class; though I hold also that the class meeting, properly conducted, is a great blessing, and one of the best *human* devices to keep the life of God in the soul. God guide us in this matter, for the issue is momentous in its bearing on the future of our Church.

"*June 7th.*—Mercifully preserved through exhausting heat and labour in my missionary deputation. Had a season of intense difficulty on Tuesday while preaching at Brunswick. Distressed by the heat almost beyond endurance, and had the strange flushing feeling, as if the blood were being determined towards the head, which I have had once or twice in Montreal, but nowhere else. The meetings were uniformly well attended, financially successful, and conducted in a good spirit. During my absence I completed my fiftieth year. Oh, how barren my life seems! I have sincerely wished to make it a fruitful one, but my inconstancy of purpose humbles me, and the lack of high and abiding spirituality causes me to mourn. Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, and He shall hear my vows again.

"*June 21st.*—Have heard an assuring and encouraging sermon from my young colleague this morning. May the Lord bless and prosper my brother. He bids fair for eminent usefulness, if he keeps his spirit right, of which, by God's help, I have no fear.

"*July 19th.*—The preliminary Stationing Committee entailed two days of close sitting and hard labour. In prospect of the morrow's journey, and of the possibilities of the next month, feel full power to stay my soul on God, whether honour be conferred or withheld. From my heart I pray that if it be not God's will, I may remain among the multitude of the brethren. That will I do make supreme."

The allusion of the words last quoted is to the probability of his being elected President of the Conference. He was not unaware that this was generally considered certain. Nor could one so deeply attached as he to the Conference, so charged with its spirit and traditions, be indifferent to the prospect of becoming its President. Indeed, from the position he held in English Methodism, and the offices he had filled in Canada, his non-election to the chair of the Conference would have had something of a marked and positive character about it, not far removed from censure, or an expression of want of confidence. It is not impossible that in depressed and morbid moods some feeling of the sort crossed his mind, a lingering result of the pain he had received from certain comments made upon his marriage and settlement in Canada.

The Conference of 1874 assembled in Camborne on the 29th of July, and Dr. Punshon was elected President by a very large majority of votes. In the course of his address on assuming the office he said—

"I can truly say that this moment of my honour is the lowliest moment of my life. Any feeling of elation is effectually overborne by the consciousness of personal unworthiness, and by a sense of deepening

responsibility which awes me while I try to realise it. I should be ungrateful indeed if I were not to express my sense of the kindness of those whose votes have placed me here. Although I humble myself before God in the presence of my brethren, I feel that ever since He called me into this ministry I have had one mark of discipleship—I have loved the brethren. My heart has gone out after them with an ardour which many waters could not quench. I have longed for their esteem as I have never longed for worldly treasure, and as a mark of your regard and confidence in me, this election of to-day is a tribute more precious than gold. Of my manifold infirmities I feel a great deal more than I shall say. But I remember a saying of one of my distinguished predecessors in this office, that every office has its perquisites, and that the perquisites of this particular office are the prayers of the brethren.

“ . . . We have reason to be thankful for the position which God has given us as a Church. I do not succeed to a diminished nor to an endangered heritage. We are at peace among ourselves ; there is no schism in our body ; we hold to the doctrines of our fathers, which are also, we believe, the doctrines of the Word. We have the sacraments validly administered. We have a godly discipline which we have power to enforce. We have a Church order as effective as the most seemly, and a Church life as vigorous as the most free. We have a material prosperity unparalleled at any former period of our history, and, chiefest of all—that without which all else would be valueless—the Ark is still in our temples, and the Lord still visits us from on high.

“ We are in no wise to lose sight of our work of saving souls : that is our chief mission, to which our charter and our covenant bind us. But it seems to me that there are some errors which are now specially influential, and some truths now specially in danger. I am not sure that we may not be called upon to make sturdy protest against the widespread assumption of the priestly office and authority. We must be bold to affirm that there is now no human priesthood save that ‘ royal ’ one to which the whole company of believers is summoned. Then, against that insidious unbelief which tampers with the inspiration of Scripture, and which looses gradually from the anchorage of a positive theology, we must be bold to hold fast, that we may hold forth, the faith which was once delivered to the saints. May God help us in our protest against sacerdotalism and rationalism ; they are dangers which come from opposite poles, and, with a strange and sad kinship, threaten the Christianity of our land.

“ The longer I live the less I am disposed to call down fire from heaven upon any. We cannot afford to be intolerant in our treatment of intolerance. We cannot afford to trample upon pride with greater pride. We cannot afford it because it would neutralise our witness-bearing, fret our own souls, and bring us down from our high sphere of hallowed toil. At

the same time we must retain our self-respect ; and as we are so often asked to consent to unite or be absorbed into another Church, I think the time has come when on this question of our ecclesiastical position we should give forth no uncertain sound. We believe that we are a Church of God's making. We are content with our position ; we are assured of it ; we have no misgivings about it ; we believe it can be scripturally sustained. We have no unfriendliness to other Churches. We do not wish to build ourselves on their ruins. It is no joy to us that there are amongst them irritations of feeling and lapses from faith. But we will not be moved from the position in which we believe God has placed us. And the time is long gone by—we had better decisively affirm it—when we will listen to any proposals for union except on equal terms.

“Grave questions will doubtless be submitted to the Conference for discussion. Some have thought that we need an improved organization to adapt ourselves to the requirements of the age. Well, Methodism has been a series of adaptations from the beginning. From the beginning she has combined in wonderful harmony, unbending principles and flexible plans. I remember an utterance from this chair some years ago which I endorse to-day as a maxim of sound policy, ‘All repairs and alterations in our ecclesiastical house should be gradual, safe, and in the style of the building.’ Now, if we keep to these principles and apply them, they will preserve us. If we require anywhere a wider basis of operation, if we can enlist anywhere a wider and more loyal sympathy, if we can create anywhere a closer bond of union, we need not hesitate to address ourselves to the task without delay, without haste, without fear.”

Dr. Punshon's election to the Presidency was accompanied by that of Mr. Gervase Smith to the office of Secretary of the Conference, so that the conduct of business was in the hands of skilled administrators who were on terms of closest intimacy. This could not but facilitate matters, and the course of business moved swiftly and easily. Although there was no heroic legislation to make the second Cornwall Conference memorable, some important questions were either originated or advanced a stage. Lay Representation in Conference was a “coming event” that “cast its shadow before.”

A scheme for organizing the Kingswood and Woodhouse Grove Schools under one head mastership,

with the senior boys at Kingswood, was adopted. Much interest was shown in another scheme for establishing a school of the highest class at Cambridge, with Dr. Moulton as Head Master. This proposal also rapidly passed into the list of things accomplished.

During the session of the Conference much feeling was aroused by a correspondence between a Wesleyan minister, the Rev. Henry Keet, and the Bishop of Lincoln. Mr. Keet having lost a daughter, sought to place a tombstone over her grave in the church-yard of Owston Ferry. The incumbent of the parish refused to allow the erection of the stone unless the words "Rev." and "Wesleyan Minister" were left out.

The Bishop, on being appealed to, sustained the incumbent in his action, and wrote largely and learnedly, if not very wisely, on schism, ecclesiastical orders, and the use of titles. The judgment of the country upon the issue raised was practically unanimous. That the ground taken by the Bishop was untenable at law, and in the highest possible degree unnecessary and ill-judged, was admitted on all sides. Steps were taken by the Conference to try the question of the incumbent's right to revise an inscription on a tombstone in the parish church-yard, and the hot and angry feeling roused by the Bishop's ill-timed homily on schism subsided. But the incident is historic, and will be remembered in connection with the ecclesiastical and political developments of recent years.

On the evening of Sunday, August 2nd, Dr. Punshon preached his official sermon. He took for

his subject the latter part of the parable on the talents—Matt. xxv. 20, 21. Long before the hour announced for Divine service the chapel was crowded, and at half-past five the service began. The theme of the discourse was “Fidelity and its recompense.” He emphasized and pressed home the idea of the Christian’s responsibility to his Lord, the obligation under which he is placed to be the follower, the servant, and the witness of Christ. He showed how that responsibility extended through the humble details of common life, and could not discharge itself in isolated and exceptional efforts. He urged a consecration, not fitful and spasmodic, but abiding—a sustained fidelity to God in daily life. He showed how faithfulness is rewarded by increase of strength, by promotion to ampler spiritual life, with its increased responsibilities and enlarged opportunities of good. The sermon was at once fervent and sober-minded, full of noble sentiment, yet practical and homely from first to last. There was less of glow and passion in the style than in former years, but increased weight and seriousness, qualities to which the varied experiences of life were constantly bringing increase.

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“*August 30th, 1874.*—The Conference was united and happy. The religious services were eminently blessed. There was much freedom of discussion without acerbity, or imputation of motive. The conversation on the state of the work of God was profitable in a high degree. Least of all noteworthy things to the world, but with a significance very precious to me, the brethren by a decisive vote placed me in the chair. . . . Towards God I am a sinner, and I cast myself upon His mercy in Christ, but towards the Methodist Conference I have ever been loyal. I was sustained in much trembling, and through some difficulties; but, oh, what grace I need, and how much of godly wisdom! The brethren begin the year in

good heart and hope. Death is also at work. Four ministers have ceased to live before the publication of the Minutes. Oh, Thou Divine Father and helper, succour and purify Thy child.

"September 27th.—Away from home for ten days of supposed holiday, during which I conducted six services, some under extreme difficulty. Distressed by my increasing nervous difficulty in preaching. Trying hard to cast all upon God. I am summoned this year to a great heritage of preaching duty, and if He wills me to do it in weakness I must bow.

"November 1st.—Closely engaged on the Hymn-Book Committee, and less pleasant disciplinary business during the week. Suffering from the effects of continuous sessions of eight or ten hours per day. Relieved by the nature of the employment in the former case. Felt the reading of many precious hymns a means of grace. Bewildered in thinking upon the many seams in the visible robe of Christ. Thou must arise, O Lord, the Life in the Truth, and all is well."

TO REV. RICHARD RIDGILL.

"November 7th, 1874.

"Your kind letter of congratulation found me two days ago on a sick bed. This is the first time I have put pen to paper save to sign documents which required my signature. . . . I can assure you that through all changes the memories of our early friendship have remained vivid and strong. My first inquiry of every South African missionary is always, 'Do you know Brother Ridgill?' and then follows the series of questions, sometimes answered and sometimes not answered, about you and your belongings.

"Yes! I remember those boyish ambitions after senatorial honours. How marvellously Providence shapes our ends, and with what kindness and wisdom the angles are smoothed down, and the curves rounded for us. I am amazed at my position, and humbled to the dust under a sense of unmerited favour.

"My work here suits me. I am getting a horror of large chapels and high pulpits, and desire to leave the crowds to younger men. My health in general was improved by my residence in Canada. This attack, which has much prostrated me, was the result of a long series of labours culminating in the Hymn-Book Committee, and a Minor District Meeting on which I sat incessantly from Tuesday to Saturday last week. I got through my Sabbath work, but was seized in the middle of the night with torturing pain. . . . I still enjoy poetry, gather autographs, take every opportunity of travel, and have a keen relish of life, not, I hope, inconsistent with the hiding of a holier life within."

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"February 7th, 1875.—The Connexion has been suddenly plunged into mourning by the unexpected death of dear Mr. Wiseman on Wednesday

evening. His ailment was not considered dangerous until he was dying. A prince and a great man is fallen in our Israel. I feel that I have lost a friend.

"*February 13th.*—Mercifully sustained through the very painful service which officially devolved on me, to deliver the address at Mr. Wiseman's funeral service. Had to leave for Chester immediately afterwards. Much subdued and solemnized by this sad event. May God guide in the future, for this bereavement may make my own future uncertain."

TO REV. ALFRED REYNAR.

"*February 13th, 1875.*

"The sad loss we have sustained in the death of Mr. Wiseman has affected me so deeply that I have scarcely had heart for anything. He was with us in Committee the week before his death, and seemed to have no premonition of it. He did not 'see death' at all. His removal places my future in uncertainty. There seems a general wish and expectation that I should succeed him at the Mission House, but I don't know yet how it will be. The Lord who has directed hitherto must still direct. . . . Dear little Ellie! How is she? Don't let her forget her grandfather. I should so much like to see her now. Perhaps the day may come, who knows, when she may light up her grandpapa's old age. Moody and Sankey begin their London campaign in March. I wonder if they will move London as they have moved Scotland and the provinces. There is much prayer and expectation. We dined at Sam Waddy's last night, and met Justice Lush and Dean Stanley."

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"*February 21st.*—Two days from home this week, and two more in work in London. I long for that which I do not seem likely to get, quiet and leisure for the study of God's Word, whose inner harmonies seem to me more wonderful as I grow old. . . . A legislative measure in which I once had a deep interest again brought forward and defeated this week.

"*February 28th.*—Solemnized and stimulated at Mr. Wiseman's funeral sermon on Monday in City Road Chapel. Spoke at the Bible Meeting in Kensington in the evening, and for the rest of the week have been presiding in Committees—arduous and responsible work. Great questions affecting the future of our Church have come under review. I trust our deliberations have been wisely guided.

"*March 14th.*—Another week of mercy, and the appreciation of it heightened by the sorrow which has swept over other homes. Mr. Jenkins bereaved by the stroke of a sword like that which cleft my home asunder four years ago. It was a renewal of all my old sorrow. Mr. Sam Smith, of Sheffield, also taken suddenly to his rest. The Leys School

opened at Cambridge, under fair auspices. Dear Percy goes to begin work to-morrow. The Lord God of my fathers bless the lad!

"April 18th.—From home for two Sundays, in Manchester working and in Buxton resting. Have been marvellously sustained through the toil and solicitude of my year of office. I feel that there are many prayers rising on my behalf. So incessantly engaged that I have not been able to attend any of Moody and Sankey's meetings, where I should have wished to be present, if only to attest my sympathy with what, with some human drawbacks, I believe to be a great work of God.

"April 25th.—Bereavement has come very near us in the unexpected removal of dear, good Joseph Wood, one of my Circuit Stewards, a plain, honest man who knew Whom he had believed, and who died well.

"May 9th.—The meetings this week exciting but blessed. Sustained in my Monday's speech, which I had dreaded. Helped marvellously also in the Bible Meeting on Wednesday. Surprised and humbled to receive a letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury, thanking me for my address, and saying he should deem it a misfortune if it were not published entire. I am devoutly thankful if I was permitted to say anything which shall bear fruit that may remain.

"June 27th.—Absent during the last fortnight in Sunderland, Newcastle, Carlisle, and Ireland. The Irish Conference, at which I have been called to preside, passed off very pleasantly. Many critical matters have arisen, but a good spirit has prevailed, and the Master has been with His servants. I am cheered by the prospect of able, thoughtful young men who are rising up in the Irish ministry. Skilled workmen are needed there.

"July 11th.—The two or three last Sabbaths I have had a painful return of my former trouble in the pulpit, which has much discouraged me, though I feel, after all, power to trust myself in the Lord's hands. Have occasion to write reproachfully of myself for hasty speaking during the week. May God give me full and constant self-control."

TO REV. ALFRED REYNAR.

"July 18th, 1875.

"My last day at home before departure for Conference, and withal an anniversary, cannot be better occupied than in writing to you. Though the wide waters separate us, there will be a community of interest and feeling to-day, and we shall commune with, while we mourn, our dead. Two years in heaven! How must they feel who are thus sublimed and ennobled. They do not lose their human tenderness with the lapse of that they know not—*time*; but they bend intelligently and lovingly over our poor fortunes still. May God give us both to-day not only the inner appreciation of the heavenly, but the transformation, by

beholding, into its likeness. Dear little Ellie! Give my own dear love. I long to see the dear child. May her mother's God be her portion and defence."

The Conference of 1875, which was held in Sheffield, brought Dr. Punshon's year of office to a close, and gave him welcome release from its cares and labours. It was a great joy to him that he was succeeded in the Presidency by his friend Gervase Smith. One important duty still remained to be discharged, and that accomplished, he was, comparatively a free man. On the 4th of August he delivered his charge to the newly-ordained ministers, in the presence of an immense congregation. It was founded upon Acts xx. 28, "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers." The strain throughout was practical and hortatory, full of sympathy with those whom he addressed, whose hopes and fears, and possibilities of success or failure he well understood, and animated by an unfaltering confidence in the gospel as God's best gift to man, and the sufficient remedy for all his woes. An extract or two will show with what earnestness he pressed faithful counsels on his younger brethren:—

"You will have your share in the common temptations which beguile unwary souls. . . . These will beset you as they beset ordinary men; but you will have special temptations from your office and duties which they can neither share nor understand. Elation often waits upon apparent success, and despondency upon the late or scanty appearing of the scattered seed. If your work is easy to you, you will be tempted to be indolent; if it is difficult, you may sink beneath it in unworthy apathy, or vaingloriously overcome it in equally unworthy pride. You will, perhaps, have to labour where you can discover few congenial spirits, and more to hinder than to help. You will have to deal

with weak men, and narrow men, and timid men, and sensitive men. You will be subject to misconstruction, and neglect, and opposition, and, it may be, to slander. And amid all these difficulties you are called to show all the Christian graces ; not to be contemptuous in your strength, nor to make your liberty an occasion of another's bondage, nor to vaunt your courage, nor to fail for an instant in your meekness of wisdom. Tempted from without and from within, with peril in the heart and peril in the office, with danger lurking in the neighbourhood of duty, trembling beneath your own sense of insufficiency, wearied in spirit from the very 'greatness of the way'—nothing can save you but a healthy inward life, a near dwelling under the shadow of the mercy-seat, a close, constant, strengthening walk with God. Oh, for the perfect moral calmness which only complete trust and complete surrender can give ! 'The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me,'—so said our Divine Example. Satan will not lift the latch unless there be some faint invitation through the window. Aim at this complete separation from evil. You must be pure if you would be strong. Cultivate all holiness of flesh and spirit. Have a care that none, because of you, shall abhor the offering of the Lord, and that you be not overtaken, like David, the aggravation of whose guilt was that it made 'the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.' For your own sakes, that you may finish your course with joy ; for the Church's sake, that your lives may be your most powerful discourse ; for Christ's sake, that you may be stars in His right hand—I charge you 'keep your hearts with all diligence, for out of them are the issues of life.'"

On the maintenance of "sound doctrine" he spoke as follows :—

"It has been matter of thankful rejoicing that no doctrinal controversies have weakened or disturbed us during the century of our separate existence. We ask of you that you will not 'make this glorying void.' In the name of your fathers who commit to you this trust untarnished, in the name of the Churches which your heresy might alienate or injure, in the name of the Methodist people to whom the manna of the old Word is sweet, and who ask with strong desire 'evermore give us this bread,' I counsel you to 'hold fast,' that you may 'hold forth' this ancient Word of life. It is the more necessary that you should be settled in your faith, because of the general unsettlement around you. Though I thankfully acknowledge that the great heart of England still hungers for the living truth, and that there is a music in the name of Jesus to which the masses are fain to listen ; yet it is impossible to forget that the current thought of to-day is tending towards unbelief, and that we may have fallen upon times when many 'will not endure sound doctrine, but gather to themselves teachers,

having itching ears.' The old adversaries are still in the field, and there are others, more to be dreaded, who fight against the truth while they are clad in the armour of the true. . . .

"Brethren, it is needful that you be strong in faith yourselves, that you have a firm grasp of 'the faith once delivered to the saints,' if you are to grapple with the difficulties of your position, and become wise winners of souls. If you falter or hesitate, or fence the truth about with your reserves and your misgivings, like an Agag who 'comes delicately,' what impression are you likely to make upon your hearers? Men's *opinions* are but as the threads of the gossamer. Men's *convictions* are the powers that shake the world. You have no vantage-ground in dealing with many-sided error but in an honest and thorough confidence in the truth. Men declaim foolishly enough about dogmatic teaching. You *must* dogmatise when men are dying, and you are sent to them with 'the words of eternal life.' On minor matters, indeed, of taste, or criticism, or even of subordinate truth, you may hold your conclusion with deference, and avow it with modesty; but on the questions that press close upon eternity—on man's need and God's grace, on Christ's atonement and the sinner's pardon, on the Spirit's work and the believer's growth—on these there must be no room for hesitation or misgiving."

The vacancy in the Missionary Secretaryship, caused by the death of Mr. Wiseman, was filled by the appointment of Dr. Punshon. His qualifications for the office were conspicuous. From the very beginning of his ministry the cause of missions had lain near his heart. The advocacy of missions he regarded, not as a something additional to his vocation as a preacher of the Gospel, but as an essential part of it, without which there would be no proportion or completeness in his ministry. For nearly thirty years he had held a foremost place among missionary speakers, and no man in the home ministry had done more to urge and educate the conscience of the Church on the subject of its duty toward Christ and toward the nations. His many journeys on the continent of Europe had brought him into contact with the chief forms of modern Christian and anti-Christian life, and made

him acquainted with missionary work and workers of almost every kind. On the still wider field of the American continent he had followed the footsteps of the missionary, and studied the methods and the results of his work, both amongst the heathen and in communities recently brought within the Christian fold. All this was an invaluable preparation for the position he was now called to occupy in the administration of a great Missionary Society, while his natural gifts for dealing with men and directing affairs—so necessary in the office he was assuming—were trained by large experience to the highest efficiency. He was appointed by a practically unanimous vote of the Conference, and with the hearty approval of the whole Connexion.

The office of Missionary Secretary, which Dr. Punshon held for the remainder of his life, was the fitting climax of his life's work. The qualities that he brought to its duties have been already shown; but they will receive further illustration from the testimony of one who was closely associated with him, and had the best means of judging of the spirit in which he approached his work, and the ability with which he performed it.

The Rev. E. E. Jenkins, his colleague at the Mission House, writes as follows:—

DR. PUNSHON AS A COLLEAGUE.

“My knowledge of Dr. Punshon was enlarged and became more precise after I was called to share with him and other brethren the labours of the Mission House. My previous acquaintance had never attained intimacy. I had seen him from the distance only; for during the time when men thirst for friendship and have leisure to be friends, our lot was cast in fields remote from each other. His fame travelled to India; and I had a glimpse of the brilliancy of his endowments during

my brief visit to England in 1856. My impression of his powers was then, and for years after, an inaccurate one. There were talents and qualities which I had not seen ; their home was in the background of the character, where the best gifts reside. I had simply learned what everybody knew, that God had given to Methodism an orator and a man 'mighty in the scriptures.' The opportunities of meeting him in Conference and on Committees gave me a nearer and, therefore, a truer view of the man. I discovered that he was well nigh as strong in counsel as in speech. In administration he did not appear to seek distinction ; but when its tasks were entrusted to him, he accomplished them with so easy a mastery of the conditions of success that it seemed as if the minute divisions and complications of business were as much under the spell of his genius as the resources and embellishments of oratory.

"It was in the Mission House, however, in the near associations of mutual responsibilities and anxieties that I was able to complete the estimate, and in my own mind to perfect the image of one of the greatest men it has been my privilege to know. As his powers were equally at home in the survey of general principles, and in the laborious inspection and adjustment of details, so his fidelity was alike conspicuous in the duties that are hidden from the public eye, and in those more attractive engagements that secure a wide notice and an instant applause. He was not one of those men who are content to run after the luxuries of popularity, and leave to their colleagues the hard fare of administrative cares. Public favour had a peculiar charm for Punshon, but he was never conquered by it ; he was the steward of its gains, and not the slave. This freedom from the tyranny of fame saved him from the rivalries and jealousies incident to co-partnership. He had a strong will, and diligently urged the acceptance of his plans ; he was glad to prevail, but when beaten was ready to submit ; and the disappointment of his wishes was open and generous, there was no lingering resentment behind it. In the distribution of the duties of our department his share of the burden was necessarily large, and a sympathetic imagination made it oppressive. It not only engaged his energies but consumed them. He feared not the exhaustion of the pulpit and the platform ; for here he forgot the cares of the Board and the tasks of the desk. But in descending from the missionary theme to the missionary income, from divinity to finance, the hopeful sentiment that characterised his eloquence forsook him. At the time of which I speak we were heavily in debt, and as the state of the income promised no immediate relief, we found it absolutely necessary to retrench the missionary grants. The prudence of this step was unquestionable, but on some of our stations disaster was inevitable. This was 'a sword in our bones.' I do not imagine that Punshon felt the wound more keenly than his colleagues, but he was deputy Treasurer, and in respect of these embarrassments and the evils they drew after

them, he assumed, perhaps unconsciously, that there was no division of responsibility, and he toiled and fretted as if he were the sole occupant of the department. He was sensitive to public criticism, even when it was irrelevant and unjust, but whatever threatened to harass and dishearten our missionaries touched him far more sharply. He lived in the work of these brethren. A far-reaching sympathy made him the companion of men he had never known, and a partaker in labours he had never seen. He watched the good fight of Christ on the fields of heathenism, not only with enthusiasm and anxiety, but with a sense of conflict as if himself in the battle. He was thus in the midst of two struggles. He was in the distant and glorious strife of the Faith, and he was in the near and worrying strife of administration ; and the double contest exhausted and hastened the fall of this great and noble soldier."

CHAPTER XVII.

1875—1877.

LONDON: MISSION HOUSE. Aged 51 to 53.

Letter to Rev. R. Ridgill.—Journal.—Nottingham Conference.—Lay-representation.—Settles at *Tranby*.—Love of Life.—A Railway Porter's Dream.—Death of Rev. G. T. Perks.—Estimate of his Character.—Tribute to Dr. Waddy's Memory.—Memorial Sketch of Rev. James Parsons.—Letters to Friends.—Address : *Oxford under two Queens*.

ON leaving the Conference at Sheffield, which had released him from the cares of the presidency, and appointed him to the office of Missionary Secretary, Dr. Punshon paid his annual visit to Llandudno.

He wrote to Mr. Reynar :—

“LLANDUDNO, *August 18th, 1875.*

“We finished Conference on Friday night, and on Saturday the President and his wife, and I and mine, came to this delightful place, where we hope to stay for a fortnight. We have had an exciting Conference, and in some respects an eventful one. Lay-representation, and the political action which a Methodist preacher is authorised to take—you will, I dare say, see our discussions on these matters and their issue. My own heart is moved by what I fear as to the future of Methodism ; but the Lord reigneth, and He, if He need us, will preserve us. Gervase made an admirable President, and guided the sometimes unruly mass with much tact and skill. His health makes me anxious.”

JOURNAL.

“*September 5th.*—Those occasions at Conference to which I looked forward with trembling, almost with dread, were overruled by the sustaining grace of God, and I delivered my sermon and my charge with freedom.

My dear friend, Gervase Smith, was elected my successor, and he deported himself right skilfully, much to my unselfish rejoicing. Many critical matters were discussed with unfailing good temper. Some tendencies are rather perilous, but I trust in the overruling of Providence. . . . Enjoyed a fortnight in Wales, though I preached too often to call it absolute rest. Good dear Mr. Prest called home while we were there. I esteemed him highly for manliness and strength. During the Conference also dear Mrs. Foster's sufferings were terminated by a peaceful dismissal. It was during my absence at her funeral that I was elected to the Missionary Secretaryship by 346 votes. Thus life's mixed web is woven."

LETTER TO REV. R. RIDGILL.

"MISSION HOUSE, Nov. 24th, 1875.

"Many thanks for your felicitations on my appointment. It was brought about without my seeking, and it is a post congenial to me, and where I may yet be spared, if the Lord will, to render service. It was indeed a relief when the President's crown dropped off. It is not exactly of thorns, but the increase of responsibility and anxiety is immense, and I was right glad to be dismissed with honour.

"I am getting by degrees into the work at this house. Mr. Perks's absence has devolved unusual responsibility upon me, and I find it a post of no less difficulty than honour. However, with a brave heart and a trust in God, I hope to do yeoman service.

"Well, you have seen in Perks a real live Missionary Secretary, and find him, I am sure, no such awful or exceptional creature as you supposed. He is a scholar and a gentleman, mild, amiable, and yet shrewd and statesmanlike, and perhaps as free from prejudices as most men. His style is classic and pure; his manner, as you will have discovered, slightly laboured.

"When will you come over? It would be a delight to me to renew our youth together. And here let me say, though I am now that awful personage a Missionary Secretary, any communication from you as a friend may be as frank, and if you like, as objurgatory, as ever. There are official *hauteurs*, I know, as traditions of this place. I hope I shall not perpetuate them; though I shall find, as I have found already, that there are unreasonablenesses on the part of missionaries that impress one rather with the littleness of human nature in its best estate, than with the self-sacrifice that is ideally associated with the character. So we must hold the balance fairly!"

JOURNAL.

"December 25th, 1875.—God's good hand has brought me by the sweep of the seasons to another Christmas Day. I have breathed something of

the spirit of the Advent, and my heart was subdued into gratitude as I thought of Christ, the babe and Saviour, and all the blessings which His incarnation has scattered among men.

"January 9th, 1876.—A successful but fatiguing journey to Ivybridge to dedicate their new chapel. A day of physical feebleness on my return, but was helped yesterday in the united prayer-meeting, and to-day in preaching in the old Presbyterian Church in Oxenden Street, built originally for Richard Baxter. Mr. Frankland, I fear, dying. So our leaders of thought and action are gathered one by one.

"January 23rd.—The reaping of death has been going on since I last wrote. We buried good Mr. Frankland, our Editor, and my former colleague in Islington, on Friday. It is admonitory that from the Mission House, from the Home Missions, and now from the Book Room we have suffered bereavement in less than a year. Dear Mrs. Edward Corderoy also quietly slept away yesterday morning.

"February 13th.—Intensely cold weather. On Friday there was the densest darkness in the City for three hours, that I have ever seen. The fog hung brown, sickly, and frightful, as over a doomed town, and the gas lights from below were reflected with a weird, lurid glare.

"February 27th.—Dear little Ellie Reynar's birthday. She is four years old to-day. The Lord God of my hope and worship bless this dear child, and early give her His grace; and with all her mother's docility and meekness may she have a longer lease of life. Much from home during the past fortnight. Resting for two or three days at Wykham Park, where kind friends live in an earthly paradise. Thence to Bristol to officiate at the marriage of dear C. M., whom I have loved as my own child. The Lord give her a bright and blessed future. Preached this morning at the Baptist Church in Westbourne Grove. Met on the way, while in some depression, by a young man who told me he was converted under my preaching at Warwick Gardens last April. Much impressed and charmed with Dr. Norman McLeod's Life. I confess to a sympathy with the type of godliness which he and George Wilson exemplified.

"March 26th.—From home during the last fortnight in Herefordshire, Somersetshire, and Cornwall. Weather very cold, and bitterly trying. Work hard, but remunerative. A great revival is going on in Cornwall just now, in which strange elements mingle, but in which great good is done. Considerably harassed at the beginning of the week by tidings of discontent at Kensington, difficulty at the Mission House, etc. Yesterday one of the heavy blows of my life came upon me. I realise the fulness of the promise, though my heart bleeds. . . . May God help me, for my way is dark and tangled, and I long for strength and light. Mr. Whelpton seriously ill of Roman fever. Lord, spare a life so precious.

"April 2nd.—Passed a week of much anxiety. Mr. Hirst's friendship tried. He has earned my lasting gratitude. . . . A wretched return of

my pulpit malady this morning, the worst I have had for years. Present on Thursday at the unveiling of the monument to John and Charles Wesley in Westminster Abbey, by Dean Stanley.

"April 9th.—Mourning for dear Mr. Whelpton, who passed away on Friday evening. For quiet, unostentatious, lovable goodness, we had not his like in London. It is a mysterious dispensation,—a family of eight children left fatherless, Church work that he had undertaken which, to human seeming, there is no one else to do. I have lost a friend tried, generous, and true; nor do I know any, out of my own intimate circle, whose loss would have affected me more. Sad news from Canada also. George Macdougall, our pioneer missionary in the Rocky Mountains, has been frozen to death upon the plains, and died alone with God. Wonderful are Thy ways, O Lord, and Thy judgments past finding out.

"April 30th.—Our missionary services have begun well. I have felt much anxiety about them because the management has been left very much in my hands. We are hoping for a good and profitable meeting to-morrow. Preached to-day in much weakness. Thankful to be sustained, but feeling the need of rest. Kind Lord, undertake for me, and show me Thy mercy.

"May 7th.—The meeting passed off well. The speaking was good and well sustained. Another solemn admonishing on Sabbath last. Mr. Edwards, the Chapel Secretary, was stricken with paralysis in Hinde Street pulpit, and now lies critically ill. Very unwell during the week; feared being laid aside, and with the work I have in prospect the thought was hard to bear. Have heard Milburn from the United States this morning, and felt comforted and strengthened.

"May 28th.—Much from home, and in incessant work since my last entry. Have been preserved in journeying to Ireland and the Channel Isles, and in presiding over the First London District, which I was unexpectedly called to do through the illness of my dear friend the President. I have suffered seriously from bronchial cough, and have longed oftentimes for rest.

"June 11th.—Another breach in our ranks since my last entry, by the death of Mr. Romilly Hall, a valuable servant of Christ, with peculiarities that unfitted him to exercise a *winsome* as well as a wide influence, but one to whom I feel especially grateful, for his early ministry was greatly owned of God in arousing my spirit, and confirming my youthful resolves. Sustained through much weakness in the North Wales District Meeting, and in the most important committees of this week, over which (my friend the President still resting) I have been called to preside. The consensus of feeling and sentiment wonderful. I suppose the moral power attending these deliberations will tell upon the decisions of Conference. It is an *experimentum crucis*, but I trust it is wise and safe. May God bless our efforts, and guide us with Divine wisdom, for we shall need it. It will be

a glorious triumph for our Church if we pass through so great a crisis in peace.

"July 15th.—A distressing attack this morning which made my last sermon in Warwick Gardens a labour and a struggle. Thought I should not have been able to preach, but the Lord brought me through. This trouble occurring so frequently on Sundays is very mysterious. I wonder if I ought to take it as an intimation that my preaching work is nearly over. Met Mr. Gladstone at Mr. Newman Hall's on Wednesday, where were gathered also some fifty leading Nonconformist ministers and laymen. The talk was mainly of disestablishment. He is wonderfully versatile as well as accurate. Met several other members of Parliament on Friday, including Sir Wilfred Lawson, Mr. Stansfeld, and Professor Fawcett. More interested, though the interest of these meetings was great, by being called to unveil an obelisk at Kilburn, erected to the memory of my dear friend Whelpton.

"July 30th.—At Conference in Nottingham. We feel the need of the Lord's special guidance, for the situation is critical. A close contest for the Presidency, which devolved upon Mr. M'Aulay by a majority of nine over Dr. Rigg, and nineteen over Mr. Coley. The minds of the brethren are greatly agitated on the lay-representation question. Much prayer is offered, and I could not doubt that the Lord will guide. Was at Lambeth Palace last Monday, in conference with the Archbishop and several of the Bishops on the spread of infidelity and the best way to counteract it. The Conference notable only for the sharp contrast between Nonconformists in the Palace dining-room, and their forerunners, two hundred years ago, in the Lollards' Tower."

The question of lay-representation in the Methodist Conference, which had occupied so much of Dr. Punshon's thoughts during the year, received full discussion, and was brought to a decisive issue, at the Nottingham Conference. In its constitutional bearings it was by far the most momentous question that had arisen in the development of Methodism for a long period, perhaps since the execution of Wesley's Deed of Declaration in 1784. For many years "Committees of Review," consisting of ministers and laymen, had assembled prior to each Conference to consider and advise upon questions of Connexional administration and finance. But these Committees,

while they had much influence, possessed no power. They were not properly representative, and they had no defined and secured rights. They had done good service in the past, but their day was over. Although in their *personnel* they were as weighty as they had ever been, they were no longer regarded as satisfactory in their mode of appointment, or as possessing adequate functions. That something must be done was plain; and the task that devolved upon the statesmanship of the Conference was to devise a mode of formally associating laymen with ministers in a representative Conference, for the transaction of such business as was not specially reserved for the consideration of the Conference when composed of ministers only.

It is difficult, on looking back over the few years that have elapsed since the principle of lay-representation was adopted, to realise the fears it awakened and the opposition it received. The controversy was singularly free from bitterness, and at no time threatened the Connexion with a renewal of former agitations. None the less the opposition was formidable, supported as it was by the learning and rare personal authority of Dr. Pope, and the unrivalled constitutional knowledge and debating power of Dr. Osborn. The arguments on either side, if not already obsolete, have little interest now save for students of Connexional history. The result has been accepted, has become familiar, and is taken as matter of course. The dismal prophecies have not been fulfilled, nor do they seem on the way to fulfilment. Never did great question rise, ripen and pass on to practical issue more rapidly, and with less cost to the

body politic concerned. In a Church which, a single generation before, had lost a hundred thousand members by a fierce agitation, a great constitutional development was effected without the resignation of a minister or the withdrawal of a single member.

In the course of a very few years, belief in the principle of lay-representation passed through the familiar three stages : it was first a note of heresy ; second a test of orthodoxy ; third, a truism.

In the settlement of this question Dr. Punshon took a prominent part. He had recognised the tendency of things in the Connexion, and saw in what direction the solution must be sought. His aim was altogether practical. He cared as little for speculative methods in ecclesiastical affairs as in theology. To make a new constitution, or tinker an old one, was a task that had no attraction for him. What worked well was good, and abstract considerations would hardly tempt him to interfere with it. But if new conditions had arisen, calling for changes and re-adjustments of system and method, he was not afraid. In opinion he was liberal, in sentiment and temper conservative ; and the way in which these elements of his character were combined and balanced, fitted him to deal with the question of the day in a common-sense practical way. After careful examination of the whole range of matters to be affected, he moved the resolution in the Conference which was the key to the situation. When this was secured, the rest was matter of detail. The resolution was as follows :—

“ That it is expedient that lay-representatives shall be admitted into, and take part in the proceedings of the Conference during the time when

such matters shall be considered and decided as shall be declared to be within the province of ministers and laymen acting conjointly."

In introducing this resolution, he said, characteristically enough :—

"I am no theoriser upon these matters, and, for myself, I am not disposed to think that lay-representation will either damage the Connexion to the extent that some of those who fear its introduction imagine, or benefit it to the extent that some of those who are ardent in its favour are disposed to think. I beg to say that I am not dissatisfied personally with the report of the Ministerial Committee. I could accept either of the reports that have been presented to the Conference this morning. So far I am not wedded to any particular scheme ; but, considering the wonderful agreement to which the members of the Mixed Committee have arrived, I have felt it my duty to do what I would willingly have been excused from doing—to come, so to speak, to the front in this discussion."

The debate that followed was a memorable one. It was distinguished by two unusual incidents. Dr. Pope, whose health did not allow him to be present, addressed the Conference in a carefully written essay which was read by the Secretary ; and Mr. Arthur, who was present but unequal to the effort of speaking, placed a written speech in the hands of Mr. T. B. Stephenson, and stood by his side through the three-quarters of an hour that it occupied in reading.

On the third day of the discussion, Dr. Osborn gathered himself up and spoke against the resolution with all his strength—with the force, the ingenuity, the impressiveness which, times without number, the Conference has found irresistible. This time it was not so. Arguments that a few years earlier might have prevailed, were now ineffectual. It was inevitable that the speaker should refer to the circumstances which led to the expulsion of Alexander Kilham in 1795, and the subsequent formation of the

New Connexion. The references were rhetorically, perhaps logically, powerful; they told upon the hearers, pleasing some, exciting many, and distressing a few; but they did not produce conviction. One passage was listened to with keen interest:—

“Will any man tell me that the men who admitted me into full connexion—the men of 1797—would have consented to a proposal for a Mixed Conference? Sir, the men of 1797 brought me up. Joseph Entwistle baptised me. Jonathan Edmondson gave me my note on trial as a member, and my first plan as a local preacher. John Gaulter nominated me to the Quarterly Meeting and to the Conference; Richard Reece was my Superintendent; Richard Treffry was my bosom friend, as was his son also. . . . If I had said to those honoured fathers, ‘I am in favour of a mixed Conference of ministers and laymen,’ they would have said to me, any one of them, and all of them together, ‘My dear George, you have mistaken your place: go to the New Connexion.’ I go farther still. I say that I would have said the same to every man that has been admitted into full connexion since. I would have said the same to Dr. Punshon if he had said in 1849 that he was in favour of a mixed Conference. I should have said, ‘My dear friend, four doors higher up is the New Connexion Chapel. There you will find a mixed Conference.’”

Dr. Punshon brought the debate to a close the following day. At its beginning he had done little more than formally move his resolution. He now replied upon the whole case at considerable length, and with great vigour. He had felt somewhat keenly the personal turn of Dr. Osborn’s references, but the interval of adjournment had sufficed for any feeling of irritation to subside, and for the preparation of a well-ordered and masterly speech. Debate was not the sphere most congenial to him, or in which he had fullest use of his powers; but on this occasion there was nothing wanting. Strong in argument, happy in illustration, pungent upon occasion, but genial throughout,—he seemed to carry all before him. He had not forgotten the shrewd

passage of the previous day, concerning the New Connexion as the proper home for those who thought as he did. His rejoinder was good-humoured, but at least as keen-edged as the attack.

"I am to be handed over to the New Connexion, am I? Well, if I do go, I shall go in goodly company. First in the procession there would be Mr. Lomas and Dr. Stamp, 'wearing the white flower of a blameless life.' Then there would be some five or six Presidents, not excluding my life-long friend here, one of the manliest and most independent, as well as one of the most genial and brotherly, in the Connexion. Then, sir, if you could with propriety leave the chair, you might overtake us, and I rather think the Secretary would not be far from your heels. Then there would come two sturdy Presidents-designate arm in arm, and then such a host of brethren that I am afraid the Conference we had left would be only a melancholy 'committee of review.' . . . Sir, I will *not* go to the New Connexion; yet I have no quarrel with them, and I respect them. They went out on a principle which they maintained, and are doing Christ's service in their own way, and I have often been called upon to fraternise with them. But I will keep in the old Connexion, and, so far as my labours and prayers can avail, will make it a greater power than ever."

The resolution was carried by 369 votes to 49, a majority of 320. The principle of lay-representation was established. Two years later the first Representative Conference met in Bradford, under the presidency of Dr. Rigg, and without shock or strain, the reconstituted assembly took over the burdens and the privileges assigned to it.

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways."

JOURNAL.

"*September 10th, 1876.*—The Conference was an exciting and eventful one. The debate on lay-representation lasted four days, and was ably sustained. At the wish of the President and some of the brethren, I moved the resolution, which affirmed the principle. The chief opponents were Pope (by paper), who based his opposition on high Scriptural views of the supremacy of ministers as rulers, Jobson, Portrey, G. C. Harvard, Posnett, R. Roberts, and Dr. Osborn, with J. R. Hargreaves, as the mover

of an amendment. Mr. Arthur embodied his views in an exhaustive paper. Rigg, Bate, Perks, James, Gregory, Olver and myself did the speaking on the other side. The speeches of Perks, Gregory, and especially of Olver, were masterly. God helped me to say what I wished, and to suppress what I should have been sorry for, although the effort was great and was followed by much physical weakness. The principle was affirmed by 369 votes against 49, a result for which I am devoutly thankful."

During his first year of office at the Mission House, Dr. Punshon continued to reside at Kensington, and preached at Warwick Gardens as frequently as other duties would allow. In the meantime, he was looking out for a house that might be a permanent home, now that he was released from the necessity of removing every three years. While so engaged he experienced most of the annoyances and disappointments incidental to such a quest. In March 1876 he writes :—

"We spend our spare time in house-hunting, and find it weary work.

Three months later he says :—

"Yesterday I agreed to purchase Mr. Boyce's house, *Tranby Lodge*, Brixton. I got quite sickened with weary searchings for a place wherein to put myself; and although there are some things lacking in it, I am glad to have the matter settled, and must forthwith bend any energies I have to make it as comfortable as possible."

The process of settlement was, as is common in such cases, a long one. The course of house fitting and furnishing seldom runs smooth. Cares, half amusing, half vexatious, seem inevitable. They are hinted at in the Journal.

"There seems but little of honest punctual work done now-a-days. Led into rather unprofitable speculations as to the little influence the gospel seems to have on life."

It was probably the plumber's man who furnished the starting point for these painful speculations.

But even in these matters the end comes at last, and when the new home was complete, it was, and continued to be, a pleasant and much prized possession

JOURNAL.

"September 17th, 1876.—My first Sabbath in *Tranby*. Thanks to the great name of the Lord, who has led me all my life long until now. I would renew my covenant, and erect my altar on taking possession of my new home. Lord, save me from any possible evil, from the sense of elation, from being at ease in my possessions, from over-anxiety, from extravagance, from sloth, from any tendency to distrust or forget Thy providence.

"Bless our home, and if it please Thee, give us health to enjoy it, and to work for Thee.

"September 23rd.—My anniversary, upon which I cannot yet think without a pang. I have lived over again the shock, the complicated and unutterable agony of six years ago. God has surrounded me with many mercies, for which I praise Him, but there is a quick trouble as I recall the incidents of that great mystery of sorrow. May God sanctify me wholly, by any means. I think I can heartily pray that prayer, though the 'If it be possible' of the garden-supplication still trembles from the lips.

"October 1st.—Have been during this week in an atmosphere not the most favourable for spiritual life. On Thursday and Friday I was in attendance on the Sheriff as his Chaplain, and introduced to some of the customs and gaieties of civic life. They are worth a study, but it would fare ill with me if my life were spent in the midst of them. At the banquet in Baker's Hall had some interesting conversation with the Ordinary of Newgate, on prison discipline and reformatory work."

During the next few months the Journal records much hard work—not accomplished without weariness and pain—domestic anxieties, and the death of several friends, Dr. Waddy, Mr. George Moore, Mr. S. B. Hodge, Dr. Stamp, and others. He was often much cast down, but never long together without consolation and quickening. He was now a frequent hearer of other men's ministry, and took to himself sincerely and simply whatever of exhortation or

encouragement their preaching afforded. He refers to "a searching, humbling sermon from Mr. Osborn, on confessing Christ"; and again, "Was lovingly rebuked this morning in an exquisite discourse from Dr. Gregory, on the Labourers in the vineyard."

In December he was laid aside.

JOURNAL.

"*December 17th, 1876.*—Shortly after I had written the last entry, my throat began to bleed, and I have been a prisoner for the week. It was a merciful chastening, a summons to come apart into a quiet place, and rest awhile; but it awakened me in many and not unprofitable thoughts. Would that some master in Israel would settle for me whether this warm love of life is sinful. I am always trying myself by the test, 'Would you be willing to die now?' and as I cannot truthfully say that I could preserve an absolute balance of will, I come into a sort of condemnation. But if it was to be so, I think I can trust for the needful grace. I know not how much the body influences the mind, . . . but the Lord will make all these things right in His time."

It is easy to say of this frequently-recurring conflict with himself, that it denoted a morbid condition of mind. But there is in these matters no fixed standard of healthy thought and feeling. Men are differently affected by different aspects of "life, death, and that vast for ever." The cast of mind, and the habit of the mind's close partner the body, largely determine the range and quality of religious emotion. With the majority of persons the mystery of death is, as it were, taken for granted, and then dismissed. It lies over; and meantime does not press upon or overshadow life. But there are those who cannot thus dismiss the subject. It pursues and haunts. It awes the soul with deep, vague suggestions that cannot be reduced to language, or submitted to the logical understanding. No length of

familiarity breeds contempt. Solemn, pathetic, heart-moving,—the thought of death ministers life-long chastening. It was so in Morley Punshon's case, a part of the whole discipline by which his character was moulded, and from which he was only released in the presence of death. Face to face with it all fear was gone. Its power was spent; it had no more that it could do.

JOURNAL.

“February 15th, 1877.—Two things may be recorded that have happened since the last entry; the one, my presentation at Court, which has frightened and humbled me not a little. Now that it is over, I look back upon it with no elation, but with thankfulness that, without stifling my convictions, or sailing under false colours, I have been thus honoured. It was a great trial of nerve and patience. The other I record without comment. Some fifteen years ago a lady from Brighton entered into conversation with a porter at Paddington Station. She found him to be a Christian man. His conversion, he told her, was brought about by a dream, in which he fancied himself walking listlessly about London on the Sunday. Passing a chapel, and attracted by the singing, he entered, saw a minister in the pulpit, a minister whose face, tones, etc., impressed themselves on his memory. On waking, the dream haunted him. Some time after, when he had banished it from his mind, he was strolling aimlessly one Sunday, when the sound of singing from a certain chapel brought it vividly back to him. He went into the chapel, found it as he had dreamt of it, recognised the minister who was preaching as the one he had seen in his dream, was touched by the word, and became a new man. That minister was myself.

“February 25th.—A bad bronchial attack during the week, occasioned partly by preaching in an unfinished chapel. Depressed in spirit. Helped, though in pain, to go through several engagements, but have had to give up three that were due next week. Hope to start for Italy, if it be God's will, on Saturday, at once to visit the Churches, and to seek a little rest in change of employment. Dr. Wood of Southport gone. Very few of that generation remain.

“April 8th.—I have to record the preserving care of my Heavenly Father who has kept our party in health and safety during five weeks of constant travel. I preached in Paris and in Rome, and saw something of our work in Spezia, Bologna, and Padua, giving, moreover, two or three addresses which Mr. Pigott interpreted. I have been much interested with the

efforts that are being made to rescue Italy for Christ ; but pressed in spirit on account of the abounding ungodliness and superstition. I come home with a sense of gratitude for clearer light and greater privilege, and of shame for not being a braver and purer witness for my Lord. No fewer than seven ministers have been called away since I left home. The day wanes, and there is much work to be done."

Dr. Punshon's missionary speeches in these later years differed considerably from his earlier ones. He now dealt, as might be expected, far more closely with the details of missionary work, and the state of the Society's operations. He had, moreover, a diminishing inclination for great efforts of public speaking. He said, not unfrequently, "I leave those to younger men." He was no longer equal to the physical and nervous strain, and a quieter, less ambitious style was more in harmony with his sobered mind, and somewhat care-worn spirit. But if there was loss in oratoric force and vividness, there was gain in depth and maturity. There was always that which charmed, but there was in increasing measure that which brought the claims of Christ home to the conscience, and afforded clear views of personal and immediate duty. At the anniversary meetings of the Society, he seldom made "collection speeches," as he had been used to do ; but he contributed an element quite as important, and, even in respect of popularity, almost as effective. He prepared and read the Report. He invested it with a brightness of style, and delivered it with an elocutionary power that made it an oration in itself. It was as though the old instinct, denied its customary modes of expression, found its opportunity here, and lifted to its own height of feeling and of style what had hitherto been a mere prosaic statement.

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"*June 2nd, 1877.*—How little I thought of the great sorrow which this week would bring. Dear, good Mr. Perks, a colleague and brother beloved, removed suddenly home on Monday. He died at Rotherham, whither he had gone to preach missionary sermons, apparently in his usual health. The Lord cannot err, but the reason of this mysterious event must be left for the revelation of the hereafter to explain. Within two years from the time of my appointment, I am senior Secretary. New responsibilities come upon me such as I am ill able to bear. My God, be my helper, and strength, and present help in trouble.

"*June 10th.*—This week has been like a long, sad dream. I go down expecting to hear the familiar voice, and awake sadly to the sense of loss. The responsibilities of the new department are onerous, but we must trust until, aye and after, the Conference.

"*July 1st.*—The Lord's smiting still continues. G. C. Harvard suddenly taken at midnight on Wednesday. Thus three who took part in the debate of last Conference have met where there is no division of opinion, and where they see at once the King in His beauty, and eye to eye with each other. I fear sometimes lest the effect of these repeated strokes should be otherwise than good upon me. My memory of Mr. Harvard saddened by the thought of a momentary mistrust of each other, fully explained and atoned for, however, I rejoice to think."

It fell to Dr. Punshon's lot to prepare for the Conference the obituary record of his friend and colleague. It was a labour of love, executed with great care, and a fine appreciation of Mr. Perks's character, as will be seen from the following extracts.

"He had lofty conceptions of the attainments required for the ministry, in view of the claims of the Church and of the times, and so laid the foundations of his knowledge broadly, availing himself of every facility within his reach, to acquaint himself with any subject that might bear upon the work of his life. Philosophy and ecclesiastical history, especially were congenial studies. His early discipline in the former he used with good effect, both in his ministry and in his writings; omitting no opportunity of exposing the fallacies of certain modern philosophical principles which conflict with the word of God. But he particularly applied himself to the science of theology in all its branches. He afforded noble examples of strict dogmatic teaching, and was never weary of defending systematic theology against the attacks of those who undervalue it. Thus he became well furnished for all required service, and went far to realise his own

ideal of a minister of the Lord Jesus. His great love of Scripture grew with his growth ; and as his sermons glowed with its spirit, and his public prayers were steeped in its language, it became a peculiar element of power in his ministry. Hence, though he had no lack of apt and happy words in which to give forth the weighty thoughts of God that were within him, his quotations were frequent and powerful. He wielded 'the sword of the Spirit' mightily, for he knew that, as David said of the sword of Goliath, 'there is none like that.' . . .

"He possessed a singularly well-balanced character, and displayed in harmonious combination qualities which are not often found together. He was catholic in his sympathies, yet unswervingly loyal to the Church of his choice. He was wise in counsel, tolerant of the views of others, manly in his independence, diffident almost to a fault, never desiring 'the uppermost room,' but always ready, if called thither, to comport himself worthily and well. He had a delicate sensibility that shrank from giving pain, but a conscientiousness, equally delicate, which gave him the moral courage for difficult duty. In all the relations of home life faithful and tender, in all the relations of ministerial life circumspect and able, judicious, godly, a lover of good men and of the truth,—it was no wonder that his brethren loved and trusted him ; and drew largely upon him for special and distinguished service. . . .

"The best years of his life were given to the interests of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, and he devoted to it the vigour of his masculine understanding, and the wealth of sympathy that dwelt in his generous soul. By judicious counsel and by eloquent advocacy, by prudent enterprise and by unfailing zeal, he served the gospel of the kingdom in this its broadest sphere of proclamation."

This delineation of Mr. Perks's life and character was listened to by the Conference in solemn silence, and with deep emotion. It was characteristic of Dr. Punshon to fasten with sympathetic insight and honest admiration upon the good qualities of good men. It was never his habit to take a character, as it were, in the lump ; he took pleasure in the details of men's excellencies, and would dwell upon them with generous appreciation.

At the same Conference, when the name of Dr. Waddy was read among those of ministers who had died during the year, Dr. Punshon spoke of his obli-

gations to him during the early part of his ministry. To his thinking, Dr. Waddy was one of the greatest men of modern times. There were many points in his character that tended to make him a pattern for young ministers, such as perfect transparency, and unalloyed sincerity. In all his dealings there was chivalrous honour. As to his commanding ministry, he never expected to see any one at whose feet he would more willingly sit. He could not describe the effect that it had upon him. "Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full,"—he always appeared to have perfect mastery of himself, and as perfect a mastery over the thoughtful among his congregations. And the grasp which he had of the great Christian verities, and the pains he took to carry his people along with him into the higher regions of Divine truth,—and how thoroughly he seemed at home when breathing the pure air of those high places! He thanked God that he ever knew him; and he trusted that many might be raised up who, if not equally gifted, might be similarly consecrated, and exert a like commanding influence in the Methodist ministry.

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"*August 19th.*—Returned home yesterday from Bristol, where I was detained a week after the close of the Conference by a carbuncle, which caused me severe pain, and has left me as weak as a child. The old fretfulness at the idea of possible danger; the old love of life struggling up; the old difficulty of *complete* surrender without an anxious or a rebel thought. 'End, Jesus, end this war within.'

"The Conference passed off, on the whole, well. Messrs. Jenkins and M. C. Osborn elected to be my colleagues. I trust we shall all work together harmoniously and well for the Master's glory. It shall not be my fault if we do not. The lay-representation matter passed through the Conference satisfactorily, and I trust I helped towards it. Some violent or self-willed laymen are aggrieved, but I think the moderate laity will accept the scheme. I am thankful that a change so great has been effected

with so much calmness and good feeling. David Hay died during the Conference.

"*September 23rd.*—An anniversary—my saddest and most mysterious. My thoughts yet dwell upon the marvel of seven years ago, with an utter incapacity to comprehend it, and with as tender a memory, but with deeper patience and trust, and with a more abounding thankfulness for present mercies. Bereft in a minor, but still painful, degree by the departure of my dear friend Gervase Smith and his wife for Australia. He goes as the messenger of the Churches. May God have them in His keeping, restrain the winds and waves, give them all the travellers' mercies, prosper their mission, and bring them back strong for service for many years to come.

"*October 28th.*—Have preached this morning under a heavy influenza, and almost shrink from work and travel on the morrow. James Parsons taken home in his 79th year, a man to whom I owe much, and whom I loved much. His has been a beautiful life, and an eminently successful ministry.

In the *Recorder* of October 26th Dr. Punshon paid the following tribute to the memory of Mr. Parsons :—

"With many physical disadvantages, with a feeble voice, and an utterance which was a strange blending of hesitation and rapidity, with no gesture save the measured and impressive lifting of the hand, he was yet in his prime one of the most popular preachers of the day. And his popularity was legitimately earned, for it was secured without compromise of the truth. Never was there a more fearless probing of the conscience or greater fidelity in warning. It was a sight to see his spell-bound congregations, every ear strained lest it should lose a sentence ; some late comer into the sanctuary heedlessly making his way to a seat in the gallery, but stopping midway, transfixed, seemingly, where he stood, by the glance of the preacher's eye ; and then when the climax was reached, to hear the little cough that preluded the released coughs of the congregation, held breathlessly in restraint till then. None who ever witnessed a scene like this could go away unimpressed by the solemnity of the occasion. . . . In many respects the sermons of Mr. Parsons are models of homiletical composition. It might be objected that there was lack of originality ; but, indeed, he did not aim at being more original than Paul or John. . . . If a ministry is to be judged by actual usefulness, his was an eminent success. He was always faithful to the old gospel. His soul went not out after the dainties with which some men sugar the truth ; and by his fearless and faithful 'manifestatio n,' he 'commended himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.' With strong convictions, which on fitting occasions he did not hesitate to declare, he had a catholic spirit, an over-

flowing brotherliness, the courtesy of a Christian gentleman, and a large-hearted sympathy with all that was lovely and of good report. He lived long enough to gather to himself 'honour, love, obedience, troops of friends.' Multitudes will hold his memory sacred, to whom he never knew that he had been a benefactor, and so long as any of the generation linger to which he was such a wealthy blessing, the name of James Parsons will be remembered as that of one of the most impressive of preachers and most lovable of men."

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"*December 23rd.*—On Sunday evening last I preached in Dr. Allon's new church to a vast multitude of people, numbering over three thousand. I was frightened and excited, but upheld. Three exciting services in the provinces since, so it has been a week of heavy labour.

"*December 30th.*—A very happy Christmas Day, all my family round me, and in fair health. Have been very poorly since, and am haunted today with a great dread similar to that which oppressed me four years ago. But He who delivered me then can deliver again, if it be His will, and if not, can help me to endure."

It will be observed that the references to ill-health and to nervous fears and distresses, are increasingly numerous. During these later years there was hardly a day without its bodily discomforts or mental depression. Not that he was thereby incapacitated for work, or that there was no happiness for him in his home life. This was far from being the case. But the elasticity and superabounding energy of former days were gone, and nothing could restore them. Physically, he was reaping what he had sown, gathering a harvest of weariness and pain from the prodigal expenditure of himself in former years. Something of this was apparent to every one, but neither himself nor those who watched him most closely knew how complete was the undermining of his health, or with what steady course his vital powers were deteriorating.

Meantime he laboured strenuously at the duties

of his office, and during the year preached between seventy and eighty times, lectured eleven times, and addressed upwards of fifty meetings. He also took considerable part in the management of the *Recorder* newspaper, frequently contributing leading articles.

The letters of the year, other than those of an official character, were not very numerous. A few extracts may be given.

TO REV. W. HIRST.

"January 2nd, 1877.

(Having ordered some coals for Mr. Hirst.)

"They asked me how I liked the coals. In reply I said they were good coals but hard to break. The letter this morning tells me, 'You will notice that, like wood, it has a very decided grain, and if the point of a sharp pick be driven into it *parallel with the lines of cleavage*, it will readily divide.

"This is for the benefit of your damsels. I told them to tell Emma that she must always strike the coal '*parallel with the lines of cleavage!*' She will be much edified!!"

TO REV. A. H. REYNAR.

"VENICE, March 20th, 1877.

"The Bride of the Sea is a very shrewish bride to-day, for a gale of wind is blowing, and the lagoons are in huge waves. . . . About a month ago it seemed to have become necessary for some one to come to Italy to look after certain matters in connection with our mission work, and as I was about 'run down,' and Mr. Perks could not leave, the lot fell upon me, and I was not sorry. We left home on March 2nd and crossed to Calais that evening, and the next day went on to Paris. I preached in Paris on Sunday, March 4th. The following Thursday we reached Spezia, where we have an interesting work, and where I had to inspect and report upon ground for a chapel, and the building itself, which has been suspended for seven months for lack of funds. We had an Italian service. We arrived at Rome on Saturday, the 10th. At far-off and reverent distance I followed in apostolic footsteps, and preached 'the gospel to them that are in Rome also.' Our new chapel should have been ready, but was not, and the opening is deferred for another month. We have just taken up a fine military mission in Rome, which the Americans have failed to sustain. I attended a week-night service at which seventy soldiers were present, and the work was formally transferred to our care.

Van Meter, who has been very successful in Rome, is also recalled, and some of his work will fall into our hands. . . . The Certosa, at Bologna, is one of the most beautiful burial-places in the world. You walk for miles under marble arcades, amid groups of beautiful sculpture. In the old University, moreover, I was much interested by the Etruscan remains recently excavated. There are several coffins in which skeletons were found with the teeth perfect, and the rings that were buried with them still upon the fleshless fingers. Some of them are indisputably of ancient date, for in the hand is the *obolus* to pay the fare demanded by Charon for crossing the Styx, and in some there is the piece of brass, the *æs rude*, dating before *oboli* were coined. . . . I have heard from Dr. Ryerson of his safe arrival home. We had the good old man at *Tranby*, and I felt honoured to have such a guest. We met Bishop Andrews in Rome, and Bishop Haven in Paris. How these Americans do fly about the world!"

TO REV. W. HIRST.

"May 28th, 1877.

"Will you come and help to keep the old man's birthday, and put Mrs. Hirst's second-best taffeta upon her, and bring her also! Dinner at 3 p.m. at the *Tranby Hotel*. Tuesday, 29th May. Excuse short notice, and never mind the white gloves. Oh, the memories of fifty-two years!"

TO REV. GERVASE SMITH.

"June 19th, 1877.

"I hope you will have safely arrived in Cork when this reaches you. Will you please express on my behalf to the Conference at large, and to the brethren individually, how warmly I feel towards them, and how sorely I am disappointed at not being able to be present at their sessions, and how earnestly I pray that the spirit of wisdom and unity may rest upon them from first to last. The Lord bless Irish Methodism, and make it an increasing power for good."

TO MRS. MAY.

"August 19th, 1877.

"We have been fancying our beloved friends at the Sunday tea-table, casting a stray thought after us, and wondering how we fared; and by the subtle photography in which thought adjusts the focus, and love prepares the plate, we have seen all the loved likenesses at Park House, 'distinct, minute, as in a glass.' How to thank you, dear friends, for your unqualified kindness, I cannot tell. We must be content to be your debtors, from the utter impossibility of bringing our assets up to our liabilities. But they are loving hearts to which you have been bountiful, and although gratitude has no image of Cæsar on its coinage, which does not pass current on change, there has been enough coined from that mint during the last five weeks to load a Spanish galleon. God bless you all."

During the year Dr. Punshon delivered several "Addresses" in different parts of the country. By this term was denoted something between a speech and a lecture, more formal and more carefully prepared than the one, less laboured and elaborate than the other. Of these the most important was entitled "Oxford under two Queens," delivered in Oxford, at the meeting of the Evangelical Alliance. The theme was a congenial one. A contrast between the age of Mary and that of Victoria was one to appeal to his strongest convictions, while the elements of the historical and moral picturesque furnished fit employment for his oratoric powers. It is, further, interesting as a specimen of his later style. After 1872 he ceased to prepare new lectures, so that this "Address" is by five years later than the latest of them. The style is somewhat more subdued, but the essential characteristics of his eloquence are there unchanged.

After a glowing tribute to the Oxford Martyrs, he proceeds :

"If the retrospect were not too sad for laughter, there are aspects of that age that are grotesque as well as grim. Thus priests from the pulpits gave solemn warnings against the study of Greek, lest it should make the students heretics, and against the study of Hebrew, lest it should make them Jews. Thus also it is related on the authority of Sir Thomas More, who would certainly 'set nought down in malice' which told of Romish shortcomings, that a learned priest of those days had such exaggerated reverence that, heedless of the sense of Scripture, he scraped out the word *diabolus* in his manuscript of the gospels and substituted *Jesus Christus*, on the ground that the devil's name was not fit to stand in so good a place.

"Now what was the underlying principle of all this ? These were times of ignorance which was content to be ignorance, and which resented any endeavour to enlighten it. They were times of indifference which disliked any trouble in religion, and coveted easy absolution for permitted sin.

They were times of stolid attachment to all ancient traditions. The traditions might be baseless, foolish, cruel, but the hoar of antiquity was on them, and those were branded as pestilent fellows who would attempt to sweep them away. . . If we think of these times with all their conditions of disadvantage—the Queen upon the throne intent upon coercing mind ; freedom of opinion under ban ; spiritual thought dormant or sepulchred ; the graces caricatured or absent ; faith, blind herself, blinding the eyes of hope, and strangling charity outright, because it was not fit that she should live ; and then if we look at our own times, sinister enough, God knows, in some of their aspects, but with the Queen upon the throne the patron and promoter of religious liberty, all the machinery of the constitution ready to be set in motion to screen a peasant's thatch, if wrong assail it, and to protect the beggar's conscience if he but fancy it aggrieved ; with awakened thought covetous of all kinds of knowledge ; with juster views of the nobility of man, and of the nature and claims of God ; with the light shining clear and accessible even in the midst of darkness that can hardly comprehend it, and in more favoured quarters rising into a very noon of graciousness and blessing—there is enough to move us to humility and thankfulness ; for ' the lines have fallen to us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage.'

"We will not dwell upon the cruelties of the former time. It is not our business to embitter, but to heal. We send not forth the raven from our ark, bird of hoarse note and evil omen ; we send forth the dove, and if it can find an olive-branch amid the waste of waters, we hail its return as the harbinger of peace. Moreover, as Keble says,

' Our loathing were but lost,
Of dead men's crimes and old idolatries,'

if we were not more keenly alive to the lessons which the ages teach. We are by no means apologists for the Marian persecutions, nor for the more inexcusable persecutions of those who, Protestant in name, have set up little papacies of their own ; but we ought not to forget that by that marvellous alchemy by which our God turns a curse into a blessing, we owe something of the robustness of our present faith to the persecutions that came upon our fathers. Persecution is the confession of defeat, the last resource of a beaten adversary. If, in the first age of Christianity, the enemies of the Cross could have disproved what the apostles alleged, it would have been strangled in its birth, and the Jews might have rejoiced that in the rock-hewn sepulchre they had entombed both the impostor and his doctrine. But alike in the Hall and the Sanhedrim came the admission, 'We cannot gainsay it,' followed swiftly by the expedient of their rage, 'But we can put it down.' And thus has it been in all ages. Persecution has made witnesses, who have inspired and confirmed other witnesses ; and so the truth has been preserved, and has prevailed. . . . Every imprisoned

apostle, every reviled confessor is our witness ; every Huguenot in the dungeon, and every Lollard at the stake, is our witness ; every Puritan hounded through the glen, and every Covenanter chased among the heather, is our witness ; every Christian slave done to death by his oppressor, every missionary butchered in his holy toil, every martyr soaring heavenward in his shroud of flame, is our witness that ' we have not followed cunningly devised fables,' and that our faith stands, ' not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.' . . .

" Now that these circumstances are altered, it may be that the age is not altogether the gainer. Now that Christianity has become fashionable, the temptations to insincere profession and to superficial piety are greater. I have sometimes wondered what would be the effect if in our times the Churches were subjected to a baptism of fire, if some Saul were again to make havoc of the Church, or some Caligula or Hadrian were to purify it with lustrations of blood. Alas ! when interest can seduce men from their allegiance, and the finger of derision can turn them out of the way, it is to be feared that if real persecution were to come there would be many startling apostasies, and that the avenues of the broad road would be inconveniently crowded with recreant professors of religion. . . . It took men a long time to understand the true nature of the Church's unity. Indeed, there are some who are indocile scholars yet. Quiescence in what had been and what was, carried with it—would always be, ought always to be, *must* always be. Men reasoned like the Duke of Guise in the beginning of the old French struggles ; ' They live contented under one form of government, why in the world should they want two forms of religion ? ' These ideas were fostered by the indifference of the many, and by the tyrannous wakefulness of the few who built, while others slumbered, the high walls of their spiritual power. It was not likely, as mind awoke, that this stagnant uniformity should continue. It was felt that what was contradicted by all nature was an unnatural bond in which to swathe free men. You may deal with a dead man as you like. The mute lips will not remonstrate however the limbs are twisted ; but life rebels against unseemly handling. Hence, though often repressed, the right of private judgment was demanded as a birthright. Through the haze of obscurity its grandeur began to be comprehended, and after years of conflict and of blood this ultimate principle of Protestantism was won. And now, perhaps, the danger is that, in recoil from the ancient error of intolerance, we should be snared by ' the falsehood of extremes.' . . .

" The error of the Marian age was in the bigotry that tolerated nothing but what was prescribed by authority, as if, as Gotthold says, ' the wit of all mankind were apprenticed to their wisdom.' The error of the Victorian age bids fair to be the utter repudiation of authority, even of that which knowledge and experience give ; the rushing into frantic conceits for daring's sake ; the proceeding upon the assumption that the belief of

any doctrine by any body of men is a *prima-facie* reason for not believing it ourselves. . . . In the days of Mary, Oxford was the scene of martyrdom. In the days when John Wesley and his followers met in what was nicknamed the Godly Club, ungodliness was its prevailing sin ; in our days it may be feared that sacerdotalism on the one hand, and impatience of restraint leading to intellectual anarchy on the other, are its twin dangers, though they work from opposite poles. . . . There is, I cannot but believe, on the side of infidelity, a more determined assault upon our historic gospel than any former times have witnessed ; and an organised conspiracy on the part of the unsleeping Church of Rome, to regain its former ascendancy, a conspiracy backed by those who, in other guise, are repeating the experiment of the Trojan horse, and endangering the city by treason. We can meet these perils, under God, only by the personal and united activity of all who hold the truth as it is in Jesus, maintaining that spiritual freedom and those sacred principles which are the true sources of our national strength. If we in this land of privilege betray our trust, our ruin may be speedy and complete ; if we be faithful there need be no bounds to the greatness of our national progress.

" Our great poet was a prophet also when he said—

‘ This England never did, nor never shall,
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,
Save when it first did help to wound itself—
. . . . Nought shall make us rue
If England to herself do but prove true.’ ”

CHAPTER XVIII.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Varied Experiences of a Popular Preacher.—Letters from Strangers.—Crowded Audiences.—Newspaper Comments and Criticisms.—Statistics of Lecturing.—Home Life.—Friendships.—Recreations.—Recollections by Rev. Nevison Loraine.

It will be convenient to devote the present chapter to some aspects and incidents of Dr. Punshon's life, both public and private, that have hitherto been passed by, or but slightly referred to.

The experiences of a popular preacher are strangely varied. Among those whom he attracts are representatives of almost every type of human nature, the credulous and the sceptical, the foolish and the devout. His counsel is sought by many who are but triflers, and by some who are terribly in earnest. He is the mark for anonymous letter-writers, and for those who, apparently for lack of anything better to do, indite their crude and weak imaginings for his benefit. The same post will bring him a request for his views on the millennium, an angry rebuke for his last sermon, an inquiry as to the best method of cultivating the mind, accompanied by an essay which he is asked to read and to return to the writer with his comments upon it, a gushing epistle from a

young lady to say that on hearing him she had felt for the first time that she was understood, that his "sympathy had unlocked the portals of her heart," and, along with these, it may be, a brief imploring note from some unhappy stranger.

Few men have had ampler experience than Dr. Punshon of the variety of correspondence that pours in upon a public man. He made a point of answering all letters that were fairly answerable, but there were many that could not be so considered. Swift consignment to the waste-paper basket was the only possible course. Others were preserved for the sake of some quality they possessed,—pungent, pathetic, or ridiculous,—and these came, in time, to form a large collection. Others again involved him in the duty, from which he never shrank when the duty appeared, of writing a careful reply. Often in his busiest days would he find time to write letters of counsel, or encouragement, or warning, for which those who received them had much cause to be grateful.

Letters of thanks for good received through his ministry were ever welcome to him. The following are taken from among many.

A schoolmaster in the West of England writes to tell him that he owed his conversion to a sermon preached by him in Norfolk Street Chapel, Sheffield, seven years before.

FROM REV. J. H. NORTON.

"I have met with one this morning who wishes he could have spoken to you last night. When you preached your first sermon in Chesterfield many years ago, his brother, who was a wicked young man, and at that time contemplating suicide, came to hear you. The service led to his conversion. He gave proof for nine years of the change wrought in him by the Holy Spirit, and then died in the Lord."

A father and mother write to tell him of the death of their son, a 'prentice lad of sixteen years old :—

"In the intervals of delirium he often mentioned you to us. It appears he had frequently attended your ministry, and had heard many earnest and faithful sermons preached by you, and they had made a great impression on his mind, as he frequently referred to them in his affliction, which continued nearly eight weeks. His end was peace. Dear sir, we are all strangers to you. You have probably never seen the dear youth I now mention, but we feel grateful to you for the religious impression which your preaching, through the blessing of God, produced upon his mind."

A pupil-teacher in Yorkshire writes :—

"Accept my thanks for being the means of my conversion. I cannot describe the feeling that I have in my heart towards you. Never since I found peace with God have I passed a single day without praying that you may be made a blessing to others as you have been to me."

He concludes :—

"If you ever came into our neighbourhood, sir, we should be very happy to see you. My father is only a working man, but we should be glad to see you. We have your portrait hung up on the wall."

From a young widow :—

"I was left at twenty-six years of age a widow with a broken heart and a blighted future, but still with a strong tie to life and action, having a dear boy of two and a half years old to provide for and to love. At first I felt very rebellious ; in my selfish grief, I would have hung the earth in one universal pall. I felt angry with God for blasting the beautiful gourd under the shadow of which I had so long reclined. Your sympathetic words to the sorrowful first attracted me. It seemed as though you were preaching to me. . . . I hope you will pardon the liberty I have taken, and accept the humble gratitude of one in whose desolate heart you have caused a joy to spring up, deeper and more satisfying than has been known before."

FROM REV. W. E. GARDNER.

"Some time ago, in social converse, my host related to his guests the following 'Experience,' which I feel it my duty to repeat to you as nearly as possible in his own words. 'I shall be fifty-eight next March. My parents were moral. I lost any religion I might have previously had during our great Reform agitation. I took to vicious ways. I became a

sporting character, and was known as —. I was Bob Brettle's bottle-holder, and brought out Jem Mace, champion of the world. Just as a humbler, I preserve a cup (which he showed us) blown for me by Brettle himself. He was by trade a glass-blower. I wrote articles for the sporting papers, and people used to write to me for advice how they should lay their bets. I kept a well-frequented public-house. I intended opening another, and had paid £10 deposit money.

“One day I was passing near an old chapel at St. Martin's, perhaps seventeen or eighteen years ago, and saw a crowd. They were pushing in to hear Mr. Punshon. I followed, though I had on my sporting dress. What a rush of old feelings came over me when I got inside. I'm not clear about the text, but I remember that I felt miserable in the extreme. *He did touch me up.* I went home and up to my bedroom, and fell down and wept and roared before God. I took off my jacket to it. Christ came to me early next morning.

“When I got up I rushed off to the man to whom I had paid the deposit, and asked him to release me as I was going to give up my old life. He did so on my consenting to forfeit £9. When my former associates came and asked, ‘Which will win?’ I used to say, ‘I don't know nor care; I've nothing to do with that now. I'll tell you WHO will win—Jesus Christ.’ For years I had to bear their oaths and sneers. Now, however, they leave me alone, thank God.’

“The narrator is a highly respectable man, a class-leader, and local-preacher.”

The following letter possesses a double interest. It was the last of the kind that Dr. Punshon received, for its date is February 25th, 1881, a few days before he left home upon the journey from which he only returned to die; and it was written by the Rev. Edward Day, one of the devoutest and most thoughtful men in the Methodist ministry, at once an invalid and an earnest worker, who has himself also since then entered into rest:—

“Ever since your visit to me I have been so grateful for the counsel and encouragement you then gave me, that I feel I must write and tell you of the issue of the painful conflicts through which I was then passing. They were terrible conflicts indeed, and lasted for several months after our interview, but I am thankful to say that light and peace came at last.

“Again and again have many of your remarks recurred to me. Among

them was one to the effect that God might be permitting me to pass through these painful experiences to prepare me for greater usefulness, and to give me deeper sympathy with sinners. Whether the former will come true I do not know. I hope it may. The latter has come already. I never felt for sinners in their darkness and sorrow such a fellow-feeling as I do now, and I am trying to turn that to some account. I think you must have been specially guided by the Holy Spirit in many of your remarks. They had an appropriateness you could hardly know at the time, and were adapted to meet dark and terrible temptations which I did not and could not tell you. I pray that you may be yourself comforted with the comfort wherewith you have comforted others."

The following are of a somewhat different character :—

"I cannot say I desire to love God, but I desire to desire to love Him. Do you know what I mean? Are you certain—oh, remember that this question is one of life or death to me—are you certain that Jesus Christ loves every one? I am twenty-five years old, and have been untruthful, insincere, and utterly selfish and lazy ever since I can remember. I seem to be one of those spoken of as 'going astray and speaking lies' from their birth. I don't believe any one so vile and mean as I ever lived. How am I to get true faith? . . . I could not tell you all this if I were speaking to you; as it is I don't mind, because you will never know who I am, unless, by God's great mercy, I get to heaven by-and-by, and then, if you remembered this letter, you would be glad to know I had got there. Will you answer my questions? Especially, tell me how to pray. What does God mean in saying, 'I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy,' etc.? I suppose I am one of those on whom He will not have mercy."

One who by reason of business troubles, bankruptcy, etc., had lost hope and drifted from his connection with the Church, writes to thank him for words of sympathy and encouragement:—

"God bless you, my dear sir. There are many, like myself, willing to return. Pray welcome them. You have subdued me, and broken my heart into contrition."

From a Roman Catholic lady :—

"I still think there are some passages that seem to favour the claims of the Catholic Church, such as, 'I say unto thee, Thou art Peter,' etc. But it is clear to me that the extreme reverence paid to the Blessed Virgin is wrong, and the sacrifice of the Mass seems to me within the last three

weeks so unscriptural, opposed to the whole tenor of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that I must leave. I have prayed, I believe sincerely, that we may be directed in the right path, especially my poor son, who is in the Jesuit novitiate. On Saturday I received the enclosed letter from him. I *cannot* let him go to Rome, and have sent for him to return immediately. Pray for us, and if you could assist me by your advice as regards my son, I should be grateful."

One who describes himself as "a fast young man,"—in plain English, a vicious and dissipated fellow," writes in a tone of melancholy recklessness:—

"Having listened with some good effect to a sermon you preached a long time ago in Victoria Chapel, I thought I would write and ask your advice, because I think you know enough of life to understand better than most ministers the peculiar combination of ambitious desires and grovelling passions, high hopes and weak-minded follies, golden promises and lamentable performances with which my character abounds."

Mingled with letters like these are requests of various kinds. A young lady sends him two or three texts from which she desires to hear him preach. Another says, "I want you to write me a piece of poetry to keep in memory of you." One young man wishes for "a little information on the subject of original sin." Another wants to know "how the ark as described by Moses could possibly hold the number of creatures spoken of, and how Noah, with all his family to assist, could perform the daily Herculean task of cleansing the ark?"

A youth who dates from St. Paul's Churchyard, after hearing him lecture on *The Prophet of Horeb*, writes:—

"It was too richly clad in the garb of fascinating language to pass from the memory of any who heard it, much less from the mind of a devotee at the shrine of Apollo. I have long desired to be honoured by your friendship, but have not hitherto found opportunity to gratify that longing!"

He then modestly asks for a personal interview, that the long-desired friendship may begin as soon as possible !

A correspondent in the North of England has a case of conscience, and desires advice. He has joined an artillery Volunteer corps, which has given offence to some of the members of the Church, "especially those of little mind."

"My motive for doing so was only this. I am a thorough Englishman, not a *Jackabin* in any sense of the word. *In me it is entirely defensive.* For, if my beloved country should be invaded by any foreign foe, I should be ashamed of myself if I did not know something of the best means of dealing with an invader, and defending my dear wife, children, and interests. Your opinion, my dear sir, on this matter would settle the subject in my own mind entirely. I need not tell you that all the men joining these corps are not as good as we might desire them."

The letter of an anonymous admirer begins abruptly :—

"O CHRYSOSTOM ! this day have I first known pleasure. Yes, more than thirty years have I lived, and it has been reserved to this day and to thee to thrill my inmost chords of emotion. . . . By men of every grade and dignity in our Church have I heard its liturgy read, intoned, recited, jumbled, mumbled, in every possible manner spoiled and erroneously rendered. I never before heard it *prayed*."

But anonymous letters were not all eulogistic, as will be seen from the following :—

"It is quite useless to expatiate, as you too often do, on the grandeur of redemption and the priceless value of the Atonement. It is all a fiction. The word Atonement is not in the Greek Testament, as every scholar knows ; and the thing itself is absolutely impossible, as is fully seen by every mathematical logician. . . . By introducing the fact and the necessity of a Second Person in a consubstantial Trinity, you make Christianity itself illogical and absurd. Yet upon this fabulous Trinity you erect an artificial fabric of false doctrine, and thrust truth down deeper into the well of Plato.

"I have heard you several times. Your lecture on Bunyan fell pointless to the ground. That before the Young Men's Christian Association

was declamatory, *et præterea nihil*. I prefer a hundred lines of Horace to all the lines you recited from the modern poets. *It is your sermons that astonish and please me.* After hearing you I am affected for a week, and sometimes I wake in the night filled with visions of a beautiful futurity.

“ On Tuesday evening next, when I hope to have the pleasure of hearing you, I cannot expect or desire that you should declaim against Christianity itself, unless you disbelieve its divinity as sincerely as I do. I should be unusually pleased if you would discourse on any topic of human or supernal interest, courageously leaving out of your sermon for once the unsubstantial and hackneyed phrases of salvation by grace, justification by faith, and expiatory sacrifices, which are either artificial creations of superstition or remnants of heathenism. My intellect will thus receive a less violent concussion, when fictions are not presented to me as truth by one of your superior talents ; and whilst I resign myself for an hour to the magic of your eloquence, the sentimental or spiritual part of my nature may receive a delightful impulse on the road towards Truth, the pursuit of which is with me a labour of love.”

In contrast with the foregoing, is the following appeal from a Roman Catholic after hearing him lecture in Bristol:—

“ Why is your lot with those who are the enemies of the Church of God ? The Church parallels you with S. Vincent, S. Ignatius, S. Charles, and a host of great preachers of the gospel of Christ. Join the noble army of teachers. Call up their spirit, which is fast decaying among us ; so shall Divine grace turn *your obedience* to the greater glory of God in conversions as numerous and effective as blessed the labours of your prototypes. We have need of you in the Catholic Church. Be not content with preaching the baptism of repentance. Take to yourself the orders and mission of the Church of Rome, that sacramental grace may crown your mighty but unhallowed labours in the service of her Lord.”

These examples will suffice. It will be seen that from the outer circle of his correspondents he sometimes received words that cheered and comforted him, and not infrequently that which woke his sense of humour—revealed to those about him by the smile lurking round his mouth, or by hearty, irrepressible laughter. Often there was nothing to redeem a half score of letters from utter unprofitableness ; and

sometimes a sting like that of a serpent pierced him unexpectedly,—a slander or an insult launched from the safe concealment so dear to the mean and the malicious. But, on the whole, the letters received during the years of his ministry show that his influence was of wide and varied range, and furnish ground for the belief that in many an unrecorded instance it was an influence for highest and for lasting good.

Of Dr. Punshon's popularity as a preacher and lecturer much has been said in the course of this biography. It might be further illustrated in various ways. The ingenuity of newspaper writers on both sides of the Atlantic was often strained to the uttermost in the attempt to describe his audiences,—the numbers, the eagerness, the excitement. Persons usually measured in their speech grew eloquent as they described their impressions. On one occasion, when he preached at Gloucester, apology was made to a certain prominent citizen at the close of the service that, in consequence of the great crowd, it had been found impossible to provide him a seat. "Sir, I would have stood upon my head to hear him," was the immediate answer. A Chicago newspaper thus describes the scene at the hall where Dr. Punshon preached on a Sunday afternoon in May 1868:—

"An hour before the door opened the scene in the street was a picture. The crowd swayed up and down Washington Street, stopping all kinds of communication. Men in the struggling mass were crying out, 'Hold back there,' 'Don't crowd so,' 'Act like civilized men.' Women cried, and would have fainted if it had been a good place for it.

"When the door was opened, and the crowd were lifting each other in one sweeping human avalanche through the passage way, a man set the whole crowd into a roar of laughter by crying out lustily, 'Hold on there. Fress back, gentlemen, I have lost my wife!'

"A score of policemen at the doors vainly endeavoured to check the storm, but, breaking over all boundaries, the people poured up the broad stairs and into the spacious auditorium, until every inch where man could stand, or *hang* with one foot resting upon a footing, was full to its utmost capacity."

Lecturing at Boston, a newspaper says:—

"Every seat was occupied, and nearly two thousand dollars taken; the largest amount ever realised in this city for a single lecture, and only excelled, if excelled, by Charles Dickens. The most celebrated of living story-tellers brought no larger sums to his purse than this Methodist minister did—not to his purse, for he puts no money there, as he could easily do, but to the charities of the Church."

When he lectured at Chicago for the Young Men's Christian Association, this sum was largely exceeded. In England the proceeds of a single lecture would range from £50 to £200. At Leeds on one occasion 2,750 shilling tickets were sold, and as much as half-a-sovereign offered for one.

In looking over a number of newspaper eulogies and criticisms of Dr. Punshon's eloquence, it is amusing to notice the desperate straits into which some of his critics are brought in their effort to convey an adequate notion of his powers, and the variety of metaphors and comparisons from which they seek assistance.

One critic says:—

"His style is florid, vehement, eloquent, and impassioned—bubbling, rushing and dashing on over every obstacle, until audience and speaker are alike roused to the highest enthusiasm. It is no wonder that crowds flock to hear his wizard-like spells."

Another says:—

"We have listened to most of the popular speakers of the day, both in the pulpit and on the platform, but we never before heard any one who comes so near the ideal we have formed of a Burke or Sheridan, combined with the gospel zeal of a Wesley or Whitefield."

From a Liverpool paper we take the following :—

“ The sermon occupied an hour in delivery, during which the attention of the vast audience was entirely absorbed. It contained passages of surpassing brilliancy, great analytical skill, and touching and terrible appeal. We understand that one very singular contribution was made to the collection. An old lady who was present testified her admiration of the preacher's talent by depositing on the plate that came round to her a very handsome embroidered pair of slippers.”

One writer speaks of “ the beauty of finish, the gorgeous vocabulary, the pungent aphorism, the rainbow-tinted play of fancy.”

Another says :—

“ For Niagara-like eloquence, and John Baptist-like fidelity, he surpasses all the Christian orators I have heard.”

The following enters more into detail :—

“ The ordinary course of the sermon is like the music of a hidden brook in the leafy month of June. But intermingled with this are occasional sounds from the far-off waterfall, and sudden sweeps of the tornado and the storm. . . . He can breathe out his pure, beautiful, quiet, and blessed sentences softly as a summer evening breeze ; or he can hurry his words along and brood over the pulpit like a very storm spirit, while every heart heaves beneath the volumes of his power. Sometimes the waters of his eloquence flow and fall like a clear, cool, and refreshing spring ; and sometimes they boil and shoot forth like the jet of an Iceland geyser.”

The American newspapers are even less unrestrained in using the language of admiration and eulogy. The following is a good specimen :—

“ His words leap from his lips as tongues of fire, and like hissing serpents they wind through your imagination and soul, burning up every other idea or thought save the one they were sent to convey. The stream is uninterrupted ; every word fits to its place as a block from the anvil of an angelic forge, studded with burning sapphire. His sermon is a piece of mosaic utterly beyond the ability of a pen to reproduce.”

This fine confusion of fire and serpents, anvils and mosaics, bears witness to the writer's enthusiasm, and in that respect at least is not without value.

Another report, equally expressive of an admiration not to be hampered by narrow rules against mixed metaphors, concludes as follows :—

“He does not drown his ideas in language ; he employs just enough of his mother tongue to express his meaning ; he leaves the naked truth in his hearer’s possession, who forgets forthwith that it was ever *enveloped in the chaff of words!*”

A newspaper called *The Standard* gave a minute description of Dr. Punshon’s person, voice, manner, and style, from which an extract or two may be interesting for various reasons :—

“Person large and strongly built, tending just slightly to corpulency ; head squarely and solidly set upon a strong neck ; forehead full at the base, but slightly sloping and narrowing as it rises ; hair straight, and so thin at the parting as to suggest (only suggest) baldness ; eyes small—or perhaps, rather, made to seem half shut by heavy eyelids ; nose noticeably broad at the nostrils, cheeks decidedly heavy ; mouth and chin having nothing about them noticeable, harmonising entirely with the rest of the face ; whole cast of features impressive, but stolid, heavy, *Englishy* ;—such is the physical Dr. Punshon.

“He comes forward and begins his discourse with almost as little ado as Wendell Phillips. His style of oratory is much the same as that of Phillips, though more rhetorical, more artificial. . . . Often, especially in the early part of his address, he will stand a considerable time at once on one foot, his body leaned forward, his hands holding either side of the desk before him, and his unused leg crossed awkwardly behind the other. All this, however, ten chances to one you do not notice. As soon as he begins to speak the man is lost in the orator. Nay, the orator is lost in the oratory. His words chain you, and you forget all else.

“The pronunciation of the orator smacks of the side of the ocean from which he comes. Yet notwithstanding variations from American usage, his pronunciation is on the whole exceedingly chaste and elegant.”

A lengthy and glowing description of his style closes thus :—

“Did you ever sail by swift boat, in the midst of our glorious autumn, down the magnificent Hudson from Albany to the Palisades ? An oration of Punshon’s is such a sail, only he never lets you stop by the way. More delightful, more picturesque, more variegated, more abso-

lutely wonderful and enchanting in its rapid succession of the beautiful and the sublime, even the unequalled panorama of the Hudson is not, than is the charming voyage over which without jar of engine or flash of wheels the silver-tongued orator almost unconsciously hurries you.

"Are you a musician? Mr. Punshon is the Rossini of orators. Are you a poet, or a lover of poetry? Mr. Punshon is not Bryant, or Whittier, or Lowell, or Swinburne, or Tennyson. He is Longfellow."

A chapter might be filled with descriptions of Dr. Punshon's personal appearance that have appeared in newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic. In these descriptions, negation and affirmation often balance one another through successive paragraphs, as for example :—

"Mr. Punshon is not a handsome man, and he is nothing of a fop; there is in his build a sound English compactness, and in his dress the style of a plain English gentleman."

"There is no coquetry in his manner; not a jot of show off. He does not wait to throw his hair from his forehead, to produce a delicately scented pocket-handkerchief, to adjust his coat collar. See him as he rises, big, burly, and strongly knit, with a face in which common sense, shrewdness, benevolence, and mental power are insensibly blended."

"Mr. Punshon's appearance is neither grand, striking, nor even noticeable. He might ride in the omnibus, travel by rail, or walk the streets without any one caring to ask his neighbour, 'Do you know who that is?' He is of middle height, broad-set figure with a tendency to stoutness, with small but piercing eyes shooting from under heavy eyebrows, with a nose neither aquiline nor Grecian, nor yet a pug, but simply a full, fleshy, contented nose, occupying its fair share of the face; the mouth and chin are indicative of good humour rather than of decision of character. He is neither ugly nor handsome, but a compromise between the two."

American descriptions almost invariably speak of his eminently English appearance, and one of them has for its climax, "weight above two hundred pounds!"

A careful examination of all available *data* furnishes some interesting facts respecting Dr. Punshon's labours as a lecturer. The following is the order in

which his lectures were produced:—*Literature, Science, and Religion*, prior to 1854; *The Prophet of Horeb*, January, 1854; *Bunyan*, February, 1857; *The Huguenots*, February, 1859; *Daniel in Babylon*, March, 1861; *Macaulay*, January, 1862; *Wesley and his Times*, February, 1863; *Wilberforce*, January, 1865; *Florence and its Memories*, March, 1868; *The Men of the Mayflower*, January, 1872.

The Prophet of Horeb was not delivered more than six or seven times, as it was published soon after its first delivery. The other lectures were given in the United Kingdom and in America as follows:—

Florence and its Memories, thirty times; *Wilberforce*, thirty-two; *Bunyan*, thirty-four; *The Huguenots*, forty-eight; *Literature, Science, and Religion*, fifty-two; *Wesley*, sixty-five; *Macaulay*, sixty-eight; *Men of the Mayflower*, one hundred and twenty-eight; and *Daniel in Babylon*, one hundred and fifty-eight times, giving a total of six hundred and twenty-one. To these must be added some thirty other occasions on which he delivered less formal lectures, mainly composed of readings from the poets; and it would be a fair summary of his labours to say that between 1854 and 1881 Dr. Punshon lectured six hundred and fifty times, to audiences ranging from five hundred to five thousand persons.

During that period there were three years in which he gave no lectures, viz., 1866 and 1875 and 1876. The years spent in America were those of his highest activity as a lecturer. From 1868 to 1872 inclusive, he lectured no less than two hundred and ninety-three times. It would be a very moderate estimate to say that in this way he raised fifty or sixty

thousand pounds for various branches of Christian work ; but far beyond that must be considered the mental and moral stimulus given to tens of thousands of persons, a stimulus leading in numberless instances to higher and more fruitful life.

Even in Dr. Punshon's busiest days, his journal shows how fondly his "heart untravelled" turned toward home. There were his deepest joys and his keenest sorrows ; but from the character of his duties, his love of home was of the nature of an unsatisfied affection, one whose periods of enjoyment were broken by long and frequent intervals of privation. His capacity for home life "lacked opportunity," and for many years his desire for it was, save for snatches of possession, a "hope deferred." In the autumn of 1876, being no longer engaged in Circuit-work, he took up his residence at *Tranby*, a house that he had purchased on Brixton Hill. The feeling that he had at last a fixed abode, and a home of his own, gave him much innocent pleasure. He realised that hitherto he had only dwelt in tents ; now, so far as this life was concerned, he was a stranger and a sojourner no more. His settlement at *Tranby* was in all respects a happy one. It gave him as neighbours some of his most valued friends, and it connected him with the Brixton Circuit in many ways that were beneficial to the Circuit and agreeable to himself.

A principal feature of the house was the study, a room of noble dimensions, which he furnished with much taste ; and when his books were on the shelves, and his cabinets and albums, his collection of autographs and other treasures all conveniently

arranged, this room became the *sanctum* or inner court of the house, consecrated alike to devotion and to study, to correspondence and business, to recreation with his friends, and to domestic happiness. Many remember the study at *Tranby* as the genial centre of its household life, the focus to which its occupations and interests converged, where all that makes home happy found its intensest expression. He liked to have his friends about him,—both the older ones, the faithful companions of many years, and young people, towards whom he had an inexhaustible affection and numberless ways of showing kindness.

The pleasure that he took in his house was a sort of outward and visible sign of the joy he had in his home. No one, indeed, truly knew him to whom his home life was unknown. It was there that his character shone with its steadiest light, and all that was best, brightest, and most tender in him was revealed. His interest in those around him found expression in many ways, in none more characteristic than his prayers in the family, when the special needs of one and another were touched upon with equal tenderness and discrimination. Birthdays and other anniversaries, both joyous and sad, were carefully remembered. Scarcely a week passed, the whole year round, that he did not write one or more letters of congratulation or condolence. It was his habit to bring to the breakfast-table on Sunday morning his well-filled birthday-book, and lovingly go over the names of those whose anniversaries were drawing near. Another book which usually came to the Sunday breakfast-table was *The Chris-*

tian Year, from which he would read aloud the poem for the day. When at home on the Sunday afternoon he engaged in special intercessions for his family, praying with deep earnestness for his sons, and "an unbroken family in heaven" at last. In family prayer he would frequently quote the lines :—

" Could I be cast where Thou art not,
That were indeed a dreadful lot ;
But regions none remote I call,
Secure of finding God in all."

His little granddaughter in Canada, for her own and for her mother's sake, had a sacred place in his heart. He loved to write to her in great printed capitals, easy for a child to read. On her fourth birthday he wrote :—

"AND GRANDPAPA MUST HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TO DARLING LITTLE ELLIE ALSO, FOR HE THINKS ABOUT HER AND LOVES HER SO MUCH. AND HE HOPES SOME TIME SOON PAPA WILL BRING HER OVER THE BIG WATER, THAT SHE MAY CREEP CLOSER INTO GRANDPAPA'S HEART, AND CLIMB ON HIS KNEE, AND REMIND HIM OF DEAR MAMMA WHO IS IN HEAVEN. AND THEN WE WILL TROT OUT TOGETHER AND SEE ALL THE FINE THINGS IN THIS GREAT LONDON. MANY, MANY HAPPY RETURNS OF ELLIE'S BIRTHDAY. LOTS OF LOVE AND KISSES. I HOPE SHE WILL GROW UP TO LOVE JESUS WHO LOVES HER SO WELL. AND SO GRANDPAPA SENDS LOVE TO PAPA, AND FUNNILY SIGNS HIS NAME

"GRAND ^{PA} PUNSHON."

A year later the letter is not printed, but "writ large," as suited the growing accomplishments of a five-year-old maiden :—

"Poor grandpapa has got a very bad *bronchial* cold. That strange-looking word is so big and wonderful that Ellie will hardly know what it means ; but Ellie's papa, who is very wise, will tell her if she asks him prettily. But while he coughs so,—*Ts-ee—Ts-ah—Ts-a*, there is a heart below inside that goes on ticking, ticking with love for Ellie. And as it

is her birthday to-day, grandpapa says to all his letters, and to the people that want him,—‘ You stay on one side, while I talk a little bit to my sweet Ellie across the sea. Don’t you know that she is five years old to-day ? ’ And then, of course, they all see it right that little ladies should be attended to. Well, grandpapa prays God bless little Ellie with health and peace, and love to the dear Saviour, and all happiness ; and that she may grow and grow until she can come over to see grandpapa, and he will show her all the great glories of London, and she must lay hold of papa, and bring him also, and her dear new mamma, whom she loves. They must all come together.”

Loyalty and affection toward his friends were noticeable elements of Dr. Punshon’s character. Friendship was with him no small or subordinate interest, but at once an instinct, a passion, and a duty. No change of scene or circumstance put him out of touch with early friends ; no amount of flattery from strangers spoiled him for chosen companionships, or gave him pleasure to be compared with that he derived from the honest love of such men as Richard Ridgill and William Hirst, of Thomas M’Cullagh and Gervase Smith. Commendation from them was more to him than popular applause. Amongst laymen were several with whom he was on terms of happy intimacy almost as close. With Sir Wm. M’Arthur, Mr. Whelpton, and Mr. May, his friendship was whole-hearted and unbroken. No man prized more highly the friendship of intelligent Christian women, and few have been more indebted to it than he for counsel, and sympathy, and help of various kinds. In the homes of his friends he was an ever-welcome guest alike to parents and to children. When in health he brought with him a glow as of sunshine, a spirit of hearty enjoyment that communicated itself to all, abundant kindness, a wealth of good stories,

and unlimited capacity for being interested in the affairs of others. When suffering and depressed, he was gentle, patient, and uncomplaining, a guest even more welcome to those who knew and loved him.

Of the recreations in which he sought relief from his labours, the chief was travel. Of this he never wearied. Whether it was a few days snatched from his engagements, to be spent with a chosen friend or two in Scotland or the Lake district, in North Wales or Devonshire, or a glorious month in Switzerland or Italy, it seldom failed to brighten and refresh his spirit, and, in some degree at least, to improve his health.

The collecting of autographs was a hobby of long standing. It was always a pleasure to him to open his portfolios and show his visitors the sign-manual of his monarchs, statesmen, and men of letters, possessions in which he rejoiced with an almost boyish glee. On the happy occasions of an evening at home, when his treasures had been examined, he was ever ready to give a reading from some poet, or, better still, a recitation, in which pleasant art most people would say they had never known his equal. In capping verses, and in all that pertained to verbal ingenuities, the making and guessing of riddles, the devising of puzzles and acrostics, he was a master, and would throw himself into them with much zest and enjoyment. These are little things; and yet such little things, fringing life's severer employments, and serving to vary their strain, have their uses. They may reveal kindness and simplicity of nature, and a genial temper unspoiled alike by

prosperity and adversity. For this reason, perhaps, they hold their place among the pleasant memories of Morley Punshon that are cherished by his friends.

These details may now give place to some recollections of Dr. Punshon's earlier and later days, furnished by the Rev. Nevison Lorainé, Vicar of Grove Park West, London :—

“When first I saw and knew him, he was in the early years of his ministry, and I was quite a youth, just awaking to the joy of noble words. He had already won a wide reputation as a brilliant speaker, both on the platform and in the pulpit; and wherever he was announced to speak eager crowds assembled to listen to the young orator. And very few who heard him in those early days of his vigour and freshness that did not own the spell of his unique and glowing style. He was very youthful in appearance, and looked, though young, even younger than his years. His movements were then active, and his figure was slight. His face, not by any means handsome, was singularly mobile, and radiant with a very winning kindness of expression. His eyes were small, but remarkably alert, and sparkling with humour. His voice was somewhat harsh, having a kind of metallic ring that at the outset of his speech grated upon the hearers; but presently the ear became reconciled, and his peculiar vocal tones added force and intensity to his flowing and rapid utterance. His style was unusually illustrative and picturesque. It abounded in vivid descriptions of natural scenery, in allusions to literature and art, and apt though brief quotations. His sentences had a peculiar rhythmic beat and cadence. On the platform he gave full play to his humour and imagination; and used with singular aptitude and facility the events of the hour and the observations of preceding speakers with which to give point and effect to his own address. Yet, notwithstanding his fluent readiness in extemporaneous speech, which he freely exercised on minor occasions, his sermons and lectures were elaborated with great care, written out at length, and committed to memory with even verbal accuracy. His lecture on *The Prophet of Horeb*, remarkable as a brilliant popular oration, was scarcely less remarkable as a feat of memory. Until he was on the platform he did not decide whether to read his lecture or to attempt it *memoriter*. The occasion was one that awakened his modest apprehensions. He was young, new to a London platform, and many of his colleagues in that series of lectures were distinguished men. The sight of the vast assembly, however, inspired him; he ‘took heart of grace’ and determined to ‘speak without book.’ But before rising he passed his manuscript to a friend on the platform, saying, ‘Follow me, and if I falter

give me the book.' There was no faltering. For nearly two hours he held the rapt attention of his audience ; and, as he afterwards related to me, his friend told him that 'he had not in delivery omitted a passage, and scarcely varied a phrase.'

"From that night Morley Punshon took rank among the most eminent platform orators. It was on the platform that his eloquence found freest scope and amplest opportunity. In the pulpit he was more sober and self-restrained both in manner and style. His sermons represented in doctrine very decided evangelical Arminianism ; they were, however, rather elementary in teaching, dealing mainly with 'the principles of the doctrine of Christ.' In style they were very ornate, lavish in apt and skilfully pictured illustrations, and wrought into frequent climax, somewhat after the manner of Melvill and Parsons ; yet his style was entirely his own, the honest expression of his intellectual and moral idiosyncrasy ; and though it was evident that he spared no pains to give finish and effect to his discourses, they were yet so penetrated with earnest emotion that in his rhetoric heart was more than art.

"In those far-off days of his earlier ministry, he was, I remember, occasionally described by critics, who imagine that they can dismiss a reputation with a phrase, as a 'flowery preacher,' and others, too, not indeed 'moved with envy,' but struck with his unusually imaginative and descriptive style, fell into a frequent fault of careless criticism in dealing with writers or speakers possessing eminently some special gift, of exalting the most conspicuous talent at the expense of the general balance of other faculties. But great gifts rarely stand alone. And beneath the highly picturesque and occasionally florid style of Morley Punshon, there were sound thought and earnest conviction. He was not, indeed, philosophical, profound, or very suggestive, but his perceptions of truth were clear, his grasp was firm, and the arrangement lucid and logical. He spoke out of the fulness of his heart, and his exuberant fancy clothed and adorned rather luxuriously the things he felt and spoke.

"Morley Punshon's was a simple and manly nature. He had in him great depths of kindness. His popularity—and in his early ministry it was very remarkable—never spoiled him. Even in those younger years when responsibilities sit somewhat lightly on the life, ere the discipline of care and sorrow have sobered the judgment and mellowed the will, I never saw in him sign of affectation or conceit. These are the sins of narrower natures than his. Occasionally his manner appeared distant and reserved, but it was the result of an innate shyness that he never entirely mastered. He pleads, in one of his latest letters to me, his '*mauvaise honte*.'

"Very soon after my introduction to him we became, despite our disparity of years, closely attached and confidential friends. And the frankness and generosity of his nature betrayed itself in the freedom with which he conferred with and confided in his younger friend. Though for

the last twenty years of his life and more we saw each other very rarely—divided by distance, and, in some matters that we both held dear, separated in opinion, and with occasional long intervals of silence in our correspondence—yet, through all changes and chances, our deep and quiet friendship lived on unchanged. He was not given to change. His life gave more than one proof of the patient fidelity of his heart.

“In 1873 I wrote to him, bidding him welcome back to England from his temporary settlement in Canada. He replied at once, in the old tone of trusting affection, telling me of the great sorrows that had ‘eclipsed his life.’ He told me, also, of his great journey across the American continent to the Salt Lake City, California, Yo Semite Valley, etc.; and he added, in his own style, ‘It was a magnificent tour, considering that there were no legend-haunted castles nor spots of historic fame.’ The kindness with which he was welcomed by his ministerial brethren touched him deeply; and he expressed his grateful surprise at his ‘election to the chair of the Second London District.’

“In 1879 I had another long and touching letter from him, too confidential to transcribe. The burthen of its sorrow was the manifest fading away of his eldest son. He spoke of his son’s ‘sudden illness at Cambridge that had disappointed his hopes of University distinction,’ his subsequent reading for the bar, of his second break down with ‘serious lung-mischief,’ and added, ‘so he breaks the crown of my pride.’ Of himself he said ‘he now felt that he must go softly under the increasing burthen of his years;’ but with a noble and modest content he added, ‘My ambitions have all been satisfied, and I am now an elder among my people, in a congenial sphere of service, with enough of honour and enough of love, longing, I trust, only to be made Christ-like, more trustful, more baptised for the heritage of unutterable peace.’

“In January 1881 he wrote to me of their ‘last family Christmas together,’ for his son, he said, ‘had entered the valley of the shadow of death.’ He did not foresee his own end so near at hand, though he spoke of ‘health not firm and spirits not bright.’ And in depressed tones he added, ‘We buried Dr. Jobson yesterday. Coley has gone.’ He mentioned others, too, of familiar name who were in feeble health; some of these ‘are not,’ others of them ‘remain to this present.’ He spoke also of ‘many lay friends in sorrow,’ mentioning particularly our common friends the Bancrofts. ‘George is dead, and Arthur is come home to die; but the Lord liveth, and we all may live in Him.’ Thus he wept with them that wept, but the joy of hope shone through his sympathetic tears.

“In February I received his last note—the last of how many, specially in the earlier years, and how much valued for their fraternal friendship. It was but a line to say that his ‘shattered nervous system had collapsed, that he was compelled to relinquish all public engagements, and was about

to start with his wife and son Percy for the Riviera, and haply, to give his wanderings an object, to visit *our* mission in Rome.'

"A few weeks later I was in a friend's house where many were coming and going; an evening newspaper was brought, and some one announced among the latest items of news, 'The death of the Rev. W. Morley Punshon.' The arrow reached my heart alone; others in that company knew only that a famous orator had passed away, but I that my friend was dead. I went out to commune with that sorrow in solitude, to revive the memory of the buried years—incidents of tender friendship and scenes of sacred joy.

" "But in dear words of human speech
We two communicate no more.'

"Our first and our last meetings on earth were amid the solemnities of Divine worship. On the first occasion I listened with young surprise to the eloquent preacher. As I entered the pulpit of Holy Trinity Church, Bournemouth, a few months before his death, my eyes alighted instantly upon the familiar face of my friend. It awakened many memories, and evoked allusions and illustrations that I saw in his varying expression had for him special meaning. With the benediction of that service we parted on earth for ever. But

" " . . . tho' my lips may breathe adieu,
I cannot think the thing farewell.'

Our next meeting will be amid the solemnities of nobler worship, and the unbroken joys of the life for evermore."

Mr. Loraine, in his "Recollections," has anticipated the close of these memoirs, but it was impossible to interrupt the course of a narrative so tender, discriminating, and complete.

CHAPTER XIX.

1878—1881.

LONDON: MISSION HOUSE. Aged 54 to 56.

Last Years of Labour.—Suffering and Depression.—Journal and Letters—Death of his Eldest Son.—Last Journey to the Continent.—Illness.—Death.—Burial.—Sorrow in the Churches.—Letters from Friends.

THE beginning of the year 1878 found Dr. Punshon full of work, not in the best of health, but in fairly good spirits. Christmas had been, as usual, a happy time. Advent blessings, so often referred to by him, were realised afresh, and the home life felt the customary glow. Mr. and Mrs. Hirst, and a few other intimate friends, together with his three sons gathered round the table, and love and good wishes were sent over sea to the relatives in Canada, and to Mr. and Mrs. Gervase Smith in Australia.

Then came the services of the closing and of the opening year, prized by him now as always, and never engaged in without emotion. On New Year's Eve he attended the watch-night service at Brixton Hill Chapel. Before doing so, he wrote in his Journal :

"The year is dying fast. I have been reviewing it, and am humbly conscious of much that has been unworthy ; but I trust in Christ, and, bound by many mercies, hereby renew my covenant. I will be Thine, O

Lord, do with me what Thou wilt, put me to what service Thou wilt, and make me cheerful to obey."

On the first Sunday of the year, he assisted Mr. Hirst in the Covenant Service at Mostyn Road, returning home "wearied, but blest." The Journal says:—"The year has not opened auspiciously so far as my own health is concerned; but it has opened spiritually well." His list of engagements during the first half of the year recalls his most vigorous days. Though he had efficient colleagues at the Mission House who shared both his labours and his anxieties, that did not greatly lessen their weight. As Senior Secretary he exercised a kind of primacy—*primus inter pares*—and, in particular, carried the burden of the Society's financial affairs, not then in the most flourishing condition. In addition to his duties at the House, he spoke at missionary meetings in many parts of the country. Within a few weeks he visited West Bromwich, Bolton, Luton, Bradford, Hull, and Manchester. His speeches were mainly extempore, though now and again carried to a climax in a passage carefully prepared, and delivered with the old force and beauty. It was his custom to keep a brief record, so brief as to be scarcely intelligible to any but himself, of the topics on which he spoke. The following are examples.

"BOLTON, *Feb. 6th*, 1878.—Perks. Moral culture. Review principles. Indian famine. Spain, ailments. Italy, Spezia, Rome. Men. Openings. Prophecy. Advent. Expiation. Resurrection. Empire."

"LUTON, *Feb. 18th*, 1878.—Individual Christian life. Spain. Portugal. Italy. 'Too frightened to run away.' Men. Openings. Money. Power of littles. Milan Cathedral."

"MANCHESTER, OLDHAM STREET, *April 22nd*, 1878.—Agree with Chinese sages. Opium. 'Moral country.' Italy. Spain. Balearic Isles. Candidates. Salutation of peace. 'All hail.' Vindicate theology and

experience. West Indies. 1,000 increase. Several Circuits self-supporting. Income. Wars of Roses. Bolton *v.* Bradford. Manchester *v.* York. To-day. To-morrow. Encouragement and promise."

"EALING, *Nov.* 21st, 1878.—New Guinea. Joseph's bones. Dean Stanley. Who consecrated City Road Cemetery? Bones of John Wesley. Spain. Openings. Carmichael. Cyprus. Japan. Transvaal. Individuality. Pansy. Revival. Harder work. For Zion's sake."

His missionary speeches combined many elements, all well adjusted to one common end. There were statements of finance that the hearers could grasp and remember; rapid surveys of the world's life, and the great moral issues involved; narratives of toil and progress, of sowing and of reaping on many a mission station; features of heathenism and corrupt Christianity portrayed; instances of the power of the gospel; the story of this or that native agent; the permanent duties, motives, resources of the Christian Church; illustrations from nature and from art; gleams of humour; a pleasant story now and again; impassioned appeals to the conscience;—these and the like in ever varying order and proportion gave to his speeches at once intellectual interest and moral power, and laid the sacred cause of Christian missions on many a heart.

But his labours could not be confined to this, his own special department of Church work. Home missions, chapel building, education, philanthropy, young men's societies, all claimed and received his help. The form in which that help was sought was most frequently a lecture. After discontinuing his lectures for two or three years, he now resumed them. In 1878 he lectured twenty-seven times, and in the two following years twenty-four and thirty-four times respectively. It was, indeed, a kind of Indian

summer with him, a brief coming back again of a season that had seemed over, a renewing of the past rather than a new beginning. This year it was chiefly *The Men of the Mayflower* that he delivered, a lecture scarcely known, as yet, in England. Towards the end of January he gave it three nights in succession, in three different towns. Among the towns where he lectured during the year were Leeds, Lancaster, Bolton, Burnley, Halifax, Birmingham, Bristol and Exeter. He also delivered addresses on America, on "Large-heartedness," and on Wyclif. The year's work was enough—more than enough—for a strong man, and he was that no longer. But the desire to work while it was day consumed him, and the habit of many years helped to carry him on in spite of diminishing power.

JOURNAL.

"*January 13th, 1878.*—A week of labour. The world full of disquiet. Death in high places. The King of Italy cut down in his prime. The weather cheerless and trying, but my faith resting upon God, and I anxiously longing for the closer knowledge of His ways.

"*January 20th.*—The nation disquieted with rumours of wars, but somewhat reassured at the opening of Parliament. I trust the good Lord will preserve peace in our time. Some anxiety about —, whom I love for his sister's sake. For his sake have broken an implied rule against suretiship.

"*February 10th.*—The past fortnight has been an anxious one for England, and even yet it is not clear that we may not be involved in war. Our prayers should rise without ceasing that so terrible a scourge may be averted. There is, I fear, an increasing war party in the country. The ministry are urged on by foolish followers, and the nation is on the verge of losing its head, as on several former occasions. I have had laborious times, and have had to prosecute my work under painful conditions. An armful of boils, and a very severe dyspeptic attack have made labour difficult, and comparatively joyless. My mind has been, for the most part, equable and trusting. The Pope is dead at last. Mr. R. Bell of Newcastle also called away.

"*February 17th.*—Much engaged in absorbing committee business dur-

ing the week. I long for more complete self-command, and the power of reticence under provocation. Distressed about the relapse of one of whom I had hoped better things. Exercised about others who are under clouds of doubt. The Lord reigneth, after all, and through various processes will bring men to Himself.

“ March 3rd.—A week of anxiety and labour, closing the missionary accounts, and grieving over a somewhat diminished income. Not well in health. Mr. Robert Marsden of Sheffield suddenly taken away, and dear little Constance Cole.

“ March 10th.—In journeyings oft, and consequent dissipation of thought. Some hopefulness in reference to the object of my late solicitude. Had letters from two fallen ministers, imploring my good offices, and each of them professing bitter penitence. It is a difficult question whether it would be right ever to employ them as ministers again. But should sins of the flesh, which Jesus dealt with tenderly, be more severely punished than sins of the spirit?

“ March 17th.—Lectured to an immense crowd on Tuesday at the City Temple. Recalled some of my former feelings for the moment, but my time for this kind of usefulness is nearly over. Shattered nerves demand a quieter mode and sphere of work.

“ March 24th.—Another week of labour and travel. Some anxieties, some return of pulpit difficulty. Large meetings during the week in commemoration of Wyclif. How unselfish, and self-unconscious this great man! His work was all to him, and right nobly he did it.

“ April 7th.—Have spent a few quiet days in Cornwall and Devon. Trevanno very beautiful; a charming and a godly family. Pulpit trouble again this morning, but a blessing with the word. If I may not have this without that, then I think I can welcome *that*—exquisitely painful as it is.

“ April 28th.—Still in much labour and travel. The two preceding Sabbaths have been spent in Bristol and Manchester, on Deputation work. Encouraged by the continued missionary feeling of the people, even in these times of deep depression. The income is but little short, the expenditure greatly in excess of it. Our own services have commenced, and the sermons are preached to-day. Oh that in each heart there may be the complete consecration which is the true strength of the missionary spirit. Lord, complete it in mine! The country still unsettled, everything pointing to war.

“ May 5th.—An excellent meeting on Monday, well-sustained throughout. We put the issue clearly before the Society in the report,—retrenchment, or increased means. May God incline the hearts of the wealthy to come up to our help.”

Almost immediately after the missionary anniver-

sary came the District Meeting, and as soon as its duties were discharged, Dr. Punshon set out for Germany, to visit the missions, and transact certain business on behalf of the Society. He and his wife were joined by his friends Mr. and Mrs. Dugdale, and Mr. and Mrs. May. Many of the places included in this journey had been visited by him in former years, and he notes the changes, political and religious, that had taken place. At Brussels he watched a gorgeous procession in honour of the Virgin.

JOURNAL.

"Some, as of yore, went down on their knees in the Square, most were bareheaded; but I marked a notable difference in twenty years. Many stood sturdily erect, and remained covered. Went to our French service in the Boulevard de l'Observatoire, where M. Hocart preached on love the producer of obedience, and obedience the true expression of love. In the evening held a pleasant little service of praise, prayer, and exposition in our own rooms.

"*May 20th.*—Left for Luxembourg and Metz. Passed through the lovely valley of the Sambre. Showers alternated with sunshine as we sped along through the beautiful forest of St. Hubert, and on through picturesque country to Luxembourg, which I was glad to visit again after many years. Vast political changes have taken place since then, and vast changes also in my own personal history. During the day my thoughts went back full often to the past,

" 'And thought I often of the dead,
The precious living loved not less;
For they the golden streets who tread
Look, not to envy, but to bless.'

"*May 21st, METZ.*—Rose early and found my way to the cathedral. Much delighted with it. The interior is very imposing. Thence to the markets and the Esplanade, beautifully planted with all manner of English plants and flowers. The birds were singing delightfully, and the view from the terrace of the valley of the Moselle and the fortifications of Metz was exquisitely lovely. After breakfast went again to the cathedral with the rest of the party, and much enjoyed the service. The voices of the readers were in perfect accord, and the *vox humana* stop was so skil-

fully introduced in the organ accompaniment, that it seemed as though a voice of rare sweetness, tremulous with intensity of feeling, was warbling forth its praise. I listened, and worshipped. . . . Much impressed with the astute policy of the German. They have made a great stronghold of Metz, and are rapidly changing the names of the streets. In process of time the French language will probably die out, and there will be no sign that Alsace and Lorraine were ever other than German provinces. Reached Strasbourg in the afternoon. After *table d'hôte* strolled out to the wonderful cathedral, which looked most imposing in the mellow evening light.

"*May 22nd.*—Drove round the city and fortifications, and at 11.30 arrived at the cathedral, where a large company was already assembled. At twelve the clock performed its wonderful duties. The fat cherub struck below, his twin turned the hour-glass, the old man answered the cherub's stroke of the quarters, and death tolled out the hour. The Apostles salaamed as decorously, and the cock crowed as vigorously as when I last saw them many years ago.

"*May 25th.*—Arrived at Stuttgart, and were met by Mr. Barratt, Mr. Johnson, and Mr. Trafford. Went in the evening to see the site of the new chapel in the *Sophienstrasse*.

"*May 26th.*—At 10.30 preached in our long room in the *Marienstrasse*. The room was fairly filled. Preached at Cannstadt at four in the afternoon, and took tea with Mr. Barratt.

"*May 27th.*—Drove through Cannstadt and Waiblingen to Winnenden and Backnang. At Backnang we have a little chapel, where about sixty people were assembled. I spoke through an interpreter; dined at Dieterle's, drove back to Winnenden, a very quaint old town; spoke again, as did Mr. May, and Mr. Edmunds. There were more than a hundred present.

"*May 28th.*—Went to Cannstadt to the District Meeting. Sat among the brethren, dined with them in German fashion. Mrs. Barratt and Mrs. Rogers came to tea.

"*May 29th.*—*My birthday*, the second I have spent in a foreign land. Humbled before God, and I trust contrite and resolved to be more devoted and earnest in the service of my Lord and Master. At 2.15 came to the District Meeting, which finished its sessions about four. Before leaving I was presented with an address of congratulation on my birthday, signed by all the ministers. Went into Mr. Barratt's to tea, and on the table was a beautiful cake, with the inscription, 'W. M. P. Gottes segnen zum Geburtstage.' Then came the two little girls, Irene and Stephanie, with a magnificent bouquet.

"*May 30th.*—Went to Cannstadt by the ten o'clock train, and had two hours' conversation with Mr. Barratt respecting the work. Thence drove to Waiblingen, to the Missions Fest, at which eight hundred people were

gathered in the garden in front of our preaching house. I and my companions all spoke, and two or three of the German brethren.

"*June 2nd.*—A Sunday in godless Munich, as much given up to business and pleasure as Paris. Walked in the morning to the Dom, where two thousand people were listening to a very earnest sermon ; and then to the English Church service held in a crypt of the Odeon. In the afternoon went to our mission room, and spoke to twenty-five intelligent and godly people. Held a small but profitable service in our room before retiring to rest.

"*June 3rd.*—A thoroughly wet day. Spent some hours in the Old Pinacothek, looking at the pictures, many of which I have noted, and shall remember with much pleasure."

Dr. Punshon returned to London a few days later, bringing with him copious notes of mission matters to be considered by himself and colleagues. Some of these are, from their nature, private. The following need not be so considered.

"AUGSBURG.—Preaching room up three flights of stairs, with smells. A large good room ; twenty-five present. Rent £35 per annum. No singing allowed. Edict forbidding it obtained at the instance of Lutheran ministers. Twenty-four hours' notice of any service to be given at magistrate's office, they giving receipt, and if they like, sending policeman."

"MUNICH.—Pleasant room. 1,200 marks yearly ; but 420 are paid back for rent of two rooms not needed. About thirty present. Sunday school of ten. Harmonium and singing, in spite of the law. Cause here small. Rösch a promising young man."

"NUREMBERG.—Nice room. Good situation. £60 per annum. Sugar factory below ; vile odour. Good service ; thirty-five present. Congregation of two hundred. Hope it will be self-supporting in seven years."

JOURNAL.

"*June 9th.*—On May 16th a party of us started for Germany, where I have been during the last three weeks, visiting the missions, and attending the District Meeting. I preached at Stuttgart and Cannstadt, and addressed meetings, through Mr. Barratt as interpreter, at Backnang, Winnenden, Waiblingen, Augsburg, Munich, and Nuremberg. Much pleased with what I have seen, and shall have a more intelligent appreciation of the difficulties, and of the hopefulness of the work. We have been mercifully preserved. At Augsburg, some of the party were capsized in a carriage, but were not seriously hurt, and on one or two other occasions we were in seeming peril, but the Lord delivered us."

The Irish Conference met in Dublin on the 19th June, under the presidency of Dr. Pope, who was accompanied and supported by Dr. Punshon. It was an important Conference, inasmuch as it decided for the union with the Primitive Methodists of Ireland which had been for some years under consideration.

LETTER TO REV. W. HIRST.

“DUBLIN, *June 27th*, 1878.

“Our Conference has gone off well. There was a great show of opposition to the Union with the Primitives, and a very able debate ensued. At last, however, it passed unanimously. The President has done wonderfully well. He has been with us at Dalkey, and until yesterday we have thoroughly enjoyed it. Yesterday was exceedingly sultry, and I had to lecture to some thousand or two in a large hall, and am consequently exhausted to-day.

“I am deeply touched by dear Maunder's death. He was a man I greatly loved. How mysterious these removals are! He was apparently doing a very good work, and his health had seemingly improved. We had no more blameless and beautiful character among us.”

In the interval between the Irish and the English Conferences, there fell upon him, suddenly and unexpectedly, one of the heaviest sorrows of his life. Its nature cannot be explained here. It touched other lives beside his own, and is too closely connected with those who are yet living to come fairly within the province of the biographer. It would have been more agreeable to pass it by unmentioned, had that been possible. But it was a blow so shattering to health and happiness, that his after life would scarcely be intelligible if all reference to it were omitted. One compensation it had of which he was not unmindful. It called forth the loving sympathy of his friends in no common degree. Susceptible as he had always been to the manifestations of sympathy, those that he now received were particularly precious. They

helped to preserve him from utter collapse. There was one aspect of the matter more noticeable still. For years it had been his habit to look upon sorrows and disappointments in the light of discipline, of which he humbly acknowledged his need. Here was a crucial instance for the exercise of this spirit. And he was not permitted to fail. In what was, perhaps, the bitterest of all his trials, he accepted the chastisement. "He, for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness."

He wrote :—"I am in the depths, . . . compelled to go softly, but there is an arm round me, and it holds me up. . . . I need a great deal of humbling ; surely this heart of mine must have worn its pride high, when such rude blows are needed 'to break the crown of it.' . . . I have had a world of kind feeling and sympathy, and I find consolation in my work, and in 'casting my care upon the Lord.'"

JOURNAL.

"*September 8th.*—The Conference a memorable one, solemnised by the death of two of its members on the chapel premises,—Rev. P. C. Horton, and Mr. Edward Allen, of Sleaford. The shock was very great, and the admonition near and terrible. The first Representative Conference passed off well. A little effervescence at first, but it soon subsided, and the laymen bore their part, and proved, as was expected, conservative of old institutions and modes of working, while not indisposed to undertake new enterprises. Since the Conference I have been in Wales and at Blackpool in search of health, which hitherto has not come at my bidding. My whole digestive system is out of order, my heart is irritable and intermittent in its action, my liver sluggish, and, by consequence, my general health impaired. All the doctors recommend prolonged rest. I am in the hands of the Lord, and long to be *quiet* in His hands, but I often rebel. Oh for perfect submission, the blessedness of complete surrender !

"*October 20th.*—Went from home on the first of the month, and only returned last night. Eight nights have been nearly sleepless, three of them altogether so, and the weary hours of waking have tried me much, and depressed me severely on the following days. Last night I heard the clock strike each hour from eleven until nine this morning. I had some restful enjoyment at Torquay, Ilfracombe, and Lynton. We saw the Waltons off to South Africa. I long to be brought nearer to God by this discipline. I leave the future in His hands. Perhaps

“ ‘When He hath my patience proved,
 And sees me to His will resigned,
 His heavy hand and rod removed
 Shall leave the blest effect behind,
 The sure inviolable peace
 The ripened fruit of righteousness.’ ”

“October 27th.—My sleeplessness continues, though I am thankful for four good nights during the week. Two have been utterly sleepless, and one nearly so. In spite of the lassitude left by a wakeful night I was enabled to preach this morning, rising above my depressions. The Missionary Conference has been held this week. Some papers interesting, but no practical outcome. Spoke at Exeter Hall on Friday evening.”

TO REV. A. H. REYNAR.

“LONDON, November 2nd, 1878.

“Your letter, informing me of your good father’s peaceful removal, arrived only this week. There is not much room for mourning, and yet sympathy is needed in every case where the long-established ties are loosened; so please accept mine. It will be a comfort to you, apart from the hopes beyond, that you were able to afford him a home during the latest years, and so requite the good Anchises’ care.”

JOURNAL.

“November 3rd.—My dear wife confined to her room with an attack of sub-acute bronchitis, which augurs ill for the coming winter, unless God intervene. My sleeplessness has been a little better this week. Monday was the only sleepless night. I was induced very reluctantly to ask Mr. Sharr to supply for me at Brighton to-day, so I take his work at Sydenham. I have much cause for gratitude, and would strive to remember it. Preached in Oxford during the week with some freedom. The Methodist Thanksgiving Fund started auspiciously. It will require hard work and much patience to accomplish it. It is proposed to raise £200,000.”

The Thanksgiving Fund referred to in the above paragraph is the most recent of those great financial efforts to which the entire Connexion has bent its strength. Standing above such lesser undertakings as the Metropolitan Chapel Building Fund, and the Watering-places Chapel Fund, it is to be classed with the Centenary movement of 1835, and the Missionary Jubilee of 1863. It was designed to

commemorate the development of the ecclesiastical constitution of Methodism in the formation of the Representative Conference. By those who appreciated the great interests at stake, this peaceful evolution was regarded as a matter for devout thanksgiving, and for such appropriate expression of the same as it was within the power of the Church to give. In addition to this sentiment, the condition of the Connexional finances called for relief upon a considerable scale, while the work of Methodism both at home and abroad seemed to make extension at once a duty and a privilege. Under the vigorous leadership of Dr. Rigg, the President of the Conference, the scheme for a Fund, monumental so far as the event it commemorated was concerned, that should remove heavy burdens of debt, and strengthen the operations of the Church in almost every department, was presented to the Connexion. The times were far from good, and the hearts of many failed them for fear in presence of such a tremendous undertaking; but Dr. Rigg—*tenax propositi*—never faltered in his indomitable resolve. He was sustained by the ablest men in the ministry, and the most large-hearted and far-seeing of the laity, and when the first difficulties were overcome, a momentum was acquired that carried the Thanksgiving Fund to a triumphant issue. The proposed £200,000 became an actual £297,000. In its distribution, Foreign Missions received nearly £64,000; Home Missions and Extension £67,000; the Schools' Fund nearly £38,000, and the Theological Institution nearly £34,000.

Dr. Punshon was in entire sympathy with the

spirit and objects of the movement. He contributed a hundred guineas to the Fund, and advocated it at a considerable number of public meetings, at City Road Chapel, at Brixton and Blackheath, and at Bradford, Leeds, Liverpool, Nottingham, and elsewhere.

The Central Meeting for the two London Districts was held at City Road on the 3rd of December.

TO MRS. MAY.

"December 4th, 1878.

"The Lord was wonderfully with us yesterday. It would have done you good to be there. £31,000 from the two London Districts! All opposition overcome, all prejudice melted down, all hearts one. The first hour spent in sweet, humbling devotion. Then the gifts were laid upon the altar. The ministers gave £3,800. There never was so much contributed on any one occasion in Methodism. I came home, and *sleep*d after it, with a grateful heart."

JOURNAL.

"December 8th.—Have only had one sleepless night this week, for which I thank my heavenly Father. On Tuesday the meeting of the London Districts for the Thanksgiving Fund. A hallowed feeling induced in the devotional hour, and maintained to the end. No ostentation, no holding back, no pressure,—but £31,000 laid upon the altar, I trust an acceptable offering, done unto the Lord.

"December 18th.—The nation mourns to-day; for, yesterday, seventeen years after her father's death, the gentle, home-loving Princess Alice died of diphtheria. Another sword in the heart of the poor Queen. May God comfort her; and sanctify this bereavement to the surviving family.

"December 29th.—Of His infinite mercy God has brought us as a household to the last Sabbath of another year. Many loving-kindnesses have crowned the year, some heavy troubles have darkened it, but 'out of all the Lord has brought me by His love.' The troubles might have been heavier, and I might have been utterly crushed by them. Oh for grace to make the mercies and the trials alike tributary to character! Dr. Smith, I fear, very poorly, and desponding about his health, Lord, raise Thy servant to full vigour if it be Thy will. Father Tabraham, and good John Howard of Bedford, taken home during the week."

The year closed in peace. Dr. Punshon took part in the watch-night service at Brixton Hill. Just

before midnight he read the General Confession and Thanksgiving, the congregation joining in them. On the first Sunday of the new year he "heard a racy, refreshing, soul-comforting sermon from Mr. Kelly," and in the afternoon assisted in the Covenant service.

TO REV. W. HIRST.

"January 23rd, 1879.

"I have been waiting and longing to hear from you till I can't wait any longer. How are you? How is dear A——? Is it that chairmanship sits irksomely upon you, or are you bronchitically troubled, or are you really quite well? We have had a sick house. M—— has had her first attack of bronchitis, and it has left her very sensitive, and impatient of this bitter cold weather. I really believe I am mending. My sleep has partially come back to me.

"How wonderfully the Thanksgiving Fund has done in London! What think you of Mostyn Road £1,158! and the largest subscription £175 from Parker,—down to a little choir-boy who gave a farthing!

"Ours at Brixton was also a great success. We did not set the Aire on fire at Bradford. Many of the principal folk absented themselves, because they could not give what they would, and would not give what they could. We got £4,200, which included £1,000 from Henry Mitchell. They will do better when trade mends.

"Gervase keeps very poorly, and seems to have a notion that his work is done. He is very despondent about himself, which is a bad sign. Feebleness of the heart's action, causing difficulty of breathing, is his chief ailment. Our Missionary arrangements are nearly complete. Watkinson preaches on Tuesday evening, W. O. Simpson on Wednesday, the President on Thursday morning, and Theodore Monod of Paris on Friday morning. May presides at the breakfast, and Richard Haworth at Exeter Hall.

"Nance, Sholl, and J. Posnett come up for the Sunday. Rathbone Edge, and Sir Arthur Gordon, Governor of Fiji, will speak at the meeting. With Osborn just returned from the West Indies, and Simpson, I hope we may do well."

JOURNAL.

"February 16th.—A week of anxieties, mainly on account of friends. Mrs. Osborn has been seriously ill, so much so that at one time we could not tell what might be the result. Felt constrained to cry mightily to God on her account. I trust and believe that God will spare her to see her husband again. . . . I am anxious about the missions, the income, the openings that crowd upon us, and which we know not how to enter.

"*February 23rd.*—Anxieties but slightly relieved. Mrs. Osborn still ill. The Booths lingering. Dear Gervase and Mrs. May both very poorly. The mission income threatening a serious decrease. I could be very much depressed, but I am trying to stay myself on God. He will undertake for us when we need Him most.

"*March 9th.*—A few days of beautiful weather, the promise of the spring. The missionary income less seriously deficient than I had feared. We have about £4,450 below last year from the Districts. Very thankful for this continued support in hard times."

TO REV. A. H. REYNAR.

"VENTNOR, *March 18th, 1879.*

"We have escaped here for a few days. I have had a good deal of anxiety, which has brought back my sleeplessness, and as I have a heavy six weeks before me, I thought it well to secure a little rest beforehand. The times have told upon our missionary income. A week before closing our accounts, we wanted £26,000 to bring us up to last year. This has been reduced to £4,600, but this will be our deficit on the income from the Districts. The legacies will diminish this a little, but still we are largely in debt, and likely to continue so. We are not quite at one as to the best method of managing our affairs. We have some who wish to reduce our Society to the level of a commercial concern. To my mind this cannot, and ought not to be done. . . . We have had another anxiety in the protracted illness of Mrs. Osborn. Her husband has been three months in the West Indies on a missionary tour, and we feared she would not live till his return. . . . Dr. Smith, too, has been very poorly, and continues so, quite incapable of work. In the middle of May, all being well, we hope to go on the Continent, to attend the French Conference, to be held this year at Lausanne."

JOURNAL.

"*March 30th.*—Mr. Osborn brought home in health and safety two days earlier than the expected time. Feel much relieved and thankful that God has answered prayer on his behalf and his wife's. Preached this morning at Clapton, and so endeavoured to fulfil the promise which Father Booth wrung from me eighteen months ago. Felt some freedom while proclaiming the Resurrection and the Life. Some of our fathers very feeble. Mr. Bedford and Dr. Jobson both very unwell.

"*April 6th.*—A busy week; feel a little jaded, but thankful to be able to work. Dear Mr. M'Arthur brought home in safety after a pilgrimage round the world. Troubled this week by a family matter which has caused me some anxiety. Nothing but the grace of God can keep from slippery paths.

"*April 22nd.*—During the past few weeks have been much exercised in mind, and much occupied in work. Our missionary affairs trouble me.

We are largely in excess of our income, much more largely than our friends conceive, and in these times it seems impossible to increase the income. Yet retrenchment is always difficult, and we risk the loss of what has been gained by years of toil.

"*May 11th.*—Very busy last Sabbath, and the days preceding and following, with our anniversary, which has been interesting and valuable, and a little more productive than usual. Still in anxiety about mission matters. Mr. Tyack suddenly called away. Feel that I would like to live for God and His work, but also that I wish to be entirely surrendered into the loving Father's hands."

On the 22nd May Dr. and Mrs. Punshon, with their friends Mr. and Mrs. May, started for the Continent.

JOURNAL.

"Felt much in passing Marden, where I laboured, a stripling, thirty-five years ago.

"*May 23rd.*—Had a restless night, no sleep until four o'clock. At 9 a.m. went to the Rue Roquépine to attend the English District Meeting which continued until one o'clock, then adjourned to the Galerie de Montmartre for lunch. Afterwards went to St. Denis, where we inspected the room which Mr. Gibson wishes to take for evangelistic services. Returned to Mr. Close's to tea, and in the evening lectured to a fair audience on *The Men of the Mayflower*.

"*May 23rd.*—Preached to a large congregation at the Rue Roquépine. Wrote and rested in the afternoon, then attended the evangelistic service. There were about thirty adults present, and a large number of restless children. Went with Miss G—— over Miss Leigh's Home in the Avenue Wagram; then to the Rue Pergolese, where Mrs. Gibson had prepared tea for us. Afterwards had some sacred music, and walked back to the Hotel.

"*May 30th, CONSTANCE.*—Saw the cathedral, and the slab, white amidst surrounding damp, on which John Huss stood to be sentenced, St. Stephen's Church, the frescoes of the Hotel de Ville, the spot where Jerome and Huss were martyred, and the outside of the Concilium's Saal, in which the Councils of Constance were held.

"*June 1st, RAGATZ.*—A Sabbath without public service, but we held one in our room. A naval captain, hearing of it, asked leave to be present, and was very devout.

"*June 3rd.*—Started at eight for a wonderful day's ride, through the village of Sils, and up into the Schyn Pass—superb—an immense overhanging and richly-wooded chain of hills on one side, an almost fathomless depth below on the other. We came out near to Tiefenkasten, and wended our toilsome way upward to Lenz above the snow-level, then down

by a gradual and lovely descent to Coire, reaching our old quarters at Ragatz at eight, thoroughly intoxicated with beauty, or, to use a less exceptionable phrase, satisfied with seeing.

"June 8th, INTERLAKEN.—Went to the English Church, and heard an elegant combination of little thoughts from the resident clergyman. Grieved to hear of the death of Frances Ridley Havergal. Wrote a few lines upon her loss.

"Gone from us all too soon! Oh, can it be?—
Thou who hast made the earth a happier place
For multitudes who never saw thy face—
Friend, Teacher, Helper dear, we weep for thee.

Thy song was as a sweet brook, murmuring on
Through the hot desert of life's parching day,
And weary pilgrims drinking by the way,
Lifted anointed heads—but thou art gone.

We marvel not—on earth thou couldst not stay :
Here, envious discords jar, and make no chime ;
Here, frailty mocks the soul's attempts to climb ;
Cold wakenings drive our blessed dreams away.

Earth was to thee 'a strange' and captive 'land' ;
'Mid drooping willows 'the Lord's song' was sung ;
But now the full praise rolls from loosened tongue
Where the crowned harpers in His presence stand.

We, listening, sit apart, and make our moan,
Hoping against hope still to catch the song,
Stirring the fresh airs all our hearts among ;
But silent is each well-remembered tone.

Not silent! nay, in other worlds, thy name
Was whispered by the angels in their choir—
'Sweet minstrel, chastened spirit, come up higher'—
And at the call their sister-spirit came.

Went from the joyous hills and tuneful sea,
The shrines of worship and the arks of love ;
Went to the temple and the home above,
All bright and stainless—fittest home for thee.

All true, and yet, sore pressed with inward pain,
We miss one helper to each purpose high,
And all the human in us makes reply,
And loves to linger on the sad refrain—

Gone from us—all too soon!—yet rise we higher,
Our God hath but reclaimed that which He lent;
So let our dirge become our sacrament,
Plighted to heaven upon this broken lyre.

“June 12th, LAUSANNE, HOTEL GIBBON.—The Conference commenced.

“June 13th.—At Conference. Dined with the ministers. We invited them to tea. A good meeting, a blessed influence.

“June 15th.—Heard M. Hocart preach an exquisite sermon in French, almost every word of which I understood. Went then to the Scotch Church, and heard a faithful sermon from Mr. Buscarlet, the chaplain. Preached at the Valentin in the afternoon from Col. ii. 1, 2, to a congregation of 150 people. Remained at home in the evening. A happy and profitable Sabbath.

“June 22nd.—Preserved by a loving Providence through a month's absence from home. The weather has favoured us. We have seen wonderful scenery. I have renewed my acquaintance with the snow-clad Alps, and have drunk in their majesty and beauty. The journey has been a restful one. Passed my birthday at the Rhine-falls, and our wedding-day between Lausanne and Dijon. Attended the District Meeting in Paris, and the French Conference at Lausanne, and endeavoured to do some little work for God. Feel very thankful for the rest and change. Home to be troubled about the exigencies of our missionary work, but willing to cast all my care upon the Lord.”

The Conference of 1879 met in Birmingham, under the presidency of the Rev. Benjamin Gregory. Dr. Punshon's home was with valued friends, and as his public labours were comparatively light, it was a pleasant time for him. During the three weeks of the session he preached once and lectured once. He was glad to avail himself of the opportunity of hearing sermons,—on the first Sunday from Dr. Dale and Mr. Holland, and on the second from Dr. Pope and Mr. Tweddle. At the open session, when it is customary to receive the representatives of other Methodist Conferences, Dr. Punshon gave an account of the work in France, and of his recent visit to the French Conference at Lausanne.

TO REV. A. H. REYNAR.

"RHYL, *August 23rd*, 1879.

"After the fatigues of Conference we are rustivating, as usual, at Llandudno, and came over here yesterday for the Sunday. Dr. and Mrs. Smith are in the same house with us. On the whole we have had a good Conference. Some of our laymen are gifted with large tongue-power, but the general tone was wholesome and good. Our troubles are mainly financial ones, and they are heavy enough. Several Canadians and others were with us. Dr. Tiffany, two or three black bishops, Benson, Lathern, etc., looked in upon us."

JOURNAL.

"*September 7th*, 1879.—The Conference was on the whole satisfactory. A few indications of troublesome tendencies, but not many, and those confined to a few individuals. Large embarrassments in all our funds, but no panic, and but little disheartenment. Spiritual desires and purposes good. My Conference home a home in reality, bright, genial, and refreshing, the family kindness itself. Have had, and continue to have some domestic anxiety, and our dear friend Mr. Dugdale was called home on the day on which he should have travelled to Conference. . . . Last night a troubled one, trying to cast all my care upon my Father who is in heaven.

"*September 14th*.—Have had two sleepless nights again this week. Did not sleep at all through last night, a poor preparation for preaching this morning, but the Lord helped me, and was better to me than all my fears. I sometimes fear a notable break in my health, which should induce me to work while it is day.

"*September 28th*.—Preached this morning in Aldersgate Street, the temporary home of the Jewin Street congregation. There are boundless opportunities for doing good. . . . Much occupied and exercised with Mission House work, especially in reference to the West Indies.

"*October 5th*.—In work and travel during the week. In trouble and anxiety about J. W., who is pronounced to have some mischief in the left lung."

This was the beginning of what proved to be the fatal illness of his eldest son, and a new source of sorrow was henceforth opened for the father. Many hopes had gathered round a gifted and promising youth. From various causes these hopes had been for the most part unfulfilled, and now, in early manhood, the hope of life itself seemed likely to be taken away. For months, as is so often the case with con-

sumption, there were fluctuations that alternately kindled and quenched that hope; but after a while the real character of the illness became unmistakable, and the anguish of watching its inevitable progress was added to other anxieties and sorrows. The son's decline was to run its course with the gradual wearing down and wearing out of the father's strength. In their death they were not divided by more than a few short weeks.

JOURNAL.

"*October 26th.*—Brought home in safety after a fortnight's absence, during which I have been hard worked on the Leeds and Swansea deputations, and at the Sheffield Thanksgiving meeting. The President ill, I trust not seriously, but so much so as to unfit him for public service. Many of our leading men are in infirm health. It would almost seem as if the Lord had a controversy with us.

"*November 9th.*—Much in public work in Cornwall and elsewhere. J. W. home, and evidently very weak. The doctors speak gravely of his case, and say his recovery will depend upon his rallying power. I yearn for his salvation, that living or dying he may be the Lord's. Could well have spared this new trial, speaking according to the flesh, but the Lord's chastening is wholesome, and He can make it 'not grievous.'

"*November 16th.*—Suffering somewhat from face-ache, but working steadily. At four missionary meetings during the week. Much encouragement in advocating the cause for which my Master yearns. Mr. Coley had a seizure during the week. The President is still unwell. The princes and great men die or are disabled in quick succession.

"*November 23rd.*—A week during which death has come very near. Mr. Bedford passed away on Thursday, and on Friday, at three o'clock, Dr. Cather, who always seemed so strong. But 'the battle is not to the strong, nor the race to the swift.' These are admonitory visitations. May the Lord give the readiness for every event of His providence.

"*December 7th.*—Still under the shadow of the cloud. Have taken J. W. to Bournemouth, but so far there does not seem to be any improvement. Full of anxieties about him. On my return from Bournemouth on Monday, received a telegram informing me that Sir Isaac Morley had passed away, and on Friday, in the keen frost and snow-covered earth, we buried him. Latterly, he always seemed earnest in his desires for prayer, and for an interest in Christ. He has left large sums to charities.

"*December 14th.*—Have been a sufferer all the week from a very heavy

cold, caught, I expect, at the funeral, and have worked with difficulty. Mr. Osborn ill. Gloom in the weather, and sometimes in the spirit. Troubled by a report that is current that I come into great wealth by Sir Isaac's death. I am sorry, because, not being true, it will give rise to expectations which I shall not be able to gratify. I wish my sons had £1,000 each, though perhaps it is better for them that they have not ; but for myself, I can say honestly, that I am glad that God has not put upon me the responsibilities of riches, while equally thankful that, with ordinary care, I am saved from the prospect of embarrassment or anxiety in age.'

The report that Dr. Punshon had inherited a fortune from his uncle proved to be a very obstinate one. It has, indeed, taken the form of a precise statement, and the sum of £30,000 has been confidently named as that by which he benefited under Sir Isaac Morley's will. A tenth of that sum would nearly represent the amount received by Dr. Punshon and his family from this source.

JOURNAL.

"December 21st.—Tidings from Bournemouth gloomy. Much prostration, loss of appetite, etc. Prayed much that the grace of God might be manifested in a double healing, if it might be, but especially in the healing of the soul. I long intensely for this, that my son may find rest and peace through faith in Jesus."

Two literary productions of the year 1879 must be noticed here. They are both connected with the name and the labours of his great hero, John Wesley. The first is a prefatory poem to the *Wesley Memorial Volume*, edited by Dr. Clark of Savannah, and the other is an essay in the same volume on Wesley's use of the press, and contributions to the literature of his age. Of the former, the opening and the closing stanzas are as follows:—

"See God's witness unto men !
Faithful through all the earnest years,
As though, from old anointed seers,
One had been bid to earth again
For ordered work among his peers.

“Kindle as ye read the tale,
 The thrilling tale of duty done,
 Of gospel triumphs, nobly won
 By truth, almighty to prevail,—
 By love, unselfish as the sun.

* * * *

“Service is its own reward
 If the deep love but prompt the deed.
 All heaven-sent souls can ask or need
 Folds in the favour of the Lord ;
 Their guerdon this—their highest need.

“Praise we then OUR GOD ALONE,
 Who made His servant thus complete !
 And pour we, in libation sweet,
 Our wealth of spikenard—each his own—
 In tribute at the Master's feet.”

The essay is a very bright and readable one, and the student of Wesleyan history may be directed to it as giving a useful summary of Wesley's literary labours, and of the various ways in which he employed the press to sustain and supplement the work of the itinerant preacher and religious organiser.

“Few but those who have studied the matter have any idea either of the number or of the variety of Wesley's writings. To enumerate his works would be a tax even on a bookworm's memory. Their titles would swell into a good-sized catalogue, and the variety of subjects touched upon would almost suggest an encyclopedia. Reckoning his abridgments and compilations, more than two hundred volumes proceeded from his fertile pen. Grammars, exercises, dictionaries, compendiums, sermons and notes, a voluminous Christian Library, and a miscellaneous monthly magazine, tracts, addresses, answers, apologies, works polemical, classical, poetic, scientific, political, were poured forth in astonishing succession, not in learned leisure, but in the midst of the busiest life of the age—for the industrious writer was an intrepid evangelist and a wise administrator, a sagacious counsellor and a loving friend ; gave more advice than John Newton ; wrote more letters than Horace Walpole ; and managed, a wise and absolute ruler, the whole concern of a Society which grew in his lifetime to upwards of seventy thousand souls.

. . . It is necessary, if we would rightly estimate Wesley's use of the press to remind ourselves that he wrote under none of those advantages

on which authors float themselves now-a-days into renown. There was but a scanty literary appetite. The voracious love of books, which is characteristic of the present age, did not exist. The masses had not awakened from the mental slumber of ages. The taste for reading had to be created and fed. Even if men had wished to make an acquaintance with the master-minds, their thoughts were only given forth in costly volumes beyond the means of the poor. Though there had been some improvement since those days of famine when 'a load of hay' was given 'for a chapter in James,' nothing, or but little, had been done to bring wholesome literature within the reach of the hamlet as well as of the hall. So far as we can ascertain, the *first* man to write for the million, and to publish so cheaply as to make his works accessible, was John Wesley. Those who rejoice in the cheap press, in the cheap serial, in the science-made-easy, which, if he so choose, keep the working man of the present day abreast of the highest thought and culture of the age, ought never to forget the deep debt of obligation which is owed to him who first ventured into what was then a hazardous and unprofitable field. The man who climbs by a trodden road up the steepes of Parnassus, or drinks of the waters of Helicon, will surely think gratefully of him whose toil made the climbing easy, and cleared the pathway to the spring. The harvest-man who reaps amid the plenty and the singing has not earned half the reward due to him who, alone, beneath the grey wintry sky, went out for the scattering of the seed. We claim for John Wesley the gratitude of all lovers of human progress, if only for his free and generous use of the press, and for the forecasting sagacity that led him to initiate a system of popular instruction which, with all their advantages, the present race of authors has scarcely been able to improve. . . .

"His *Journals* must be studied by any who would know the man. They are his unconscious autobiography. His versatility, his industry, his benevolence, his patience under insult, his indifference to human honours, his single-mindedness, his continual waiting upon Providence, his culture, his courtesy, his combination of the instincts of a gentleman with the blunt honesty of a son of toil, his true dignity, his womanly tenderness of feeling, his racy wit, his discriminating criticism, his power of speech, his power of silence, all the elements which go to make up the symmetry of a well-compacted character ;—if any want to find these, let them go, not to the pages of his biographers, who from various standpoints and with much acuteness have told the story of his life, but let them gather what he was and what the world owes to him from these records, in which he has shown himself as in a glass, with the self-unconsciousness and transparency which only the truly great can afford to feel. We need not anticipate the world's verdict. It has been already pronounced :—

" 'Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.'

The slander was hushed into silence, and men woke up to know that a prophet had been among them ere yet he had passed from their midst. A life of such singular blamelessness and devotion is a rich heritage for any people. He was not covetous of any fame but God's ; but fame has come to him, notwithstanding, and sits upon his memory like a crown :—

“ ‘The path of duty was the way to glory,
 He that, ever following her commands,
 On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
 Through the long gorge to the far light has won
 His path upwards, and prevailed,
 Shall find the toppling crags of duty scaled
 Are close upon the shining tablelands
 To which our God Himself is moon and sun.
 Such was he : his work is done :
 But while the races of mankind endure
 Let his great example stand
 Colossal, seen of every land.’ ”

JOURNAL.

“ *January 11th, 1880.*—Since I last wrote I have been brought, by God's good providence, through the Christmas-tide, and into another year. The only chance of our having a family gathering was at Bournemouth, so we went there for Christmas and New Year's day. I am thankful for the partial rest, and for the bright climate. My dear invalid decidedly better during the last fortnight. Much pleased also with his spirit, and trust he is seeking, if he is not resting on, Christ as his Saviour. Had a fairly happy Christmas day, and a blessed watch-night service, and the renewal of the Covenant. God was indeed with us, and I felt strengthened in and for His service. In the presence of these mercies I hardly care to refer to a continuance of cough and oppression which has distressed me, or to outside anxieties of various kinds. Dear Father Rattenbury taken home in Christmas week. Could be mournful as the fathers die ; but the Great Father lives.

“ *January 18th.*—A busy week. Troubled by the expressed wish that I should preach Mr. Rattenbury's funeral sermon. I shrink more and more from these public responsibilities. I feel my unfitness for them, but I cannot disregard the plea, and so, in much weakness, I am to try on Monday the 26th inst. The Lord be my Helper.

“ *February 8th.*—Helped much in the delivery of my sermon at Liverpool Road. Since that time much in travel. Spent last Sunday in Bradford, and the first three days of the week in the north. Weather in London the last fortnight almost intolerable from the prevalence of heavy and depressing fogs.

“ *February 15th.*—Weather a little brighter, and a consequent decrease

in the death rate, which during the heavy fogs was greater than in any year since the cholera epidemic. Have been much in committee during the week. Had to mourn, in one instance, over unadvised speaking. Have entered Lent with humiliation, I trust, rending my heart, and not my garment.

"*February 22nd.*—From home during the week in the north ; we held at Newcastle a glorious Thanksgiving meeting. The enthusiasm great and well-sustained, and the results gratifying. £9,500 from the two meetings in Newcastle and Sunderland. Troubled about our missionary income. We must have £26,000 within the next ten days if the income is to be equal to that of last year. The Lord will surely undertake for us. Suffering from indigestion, and oppressed with nervous fears—dissipated when the Lord helped me, as He did this morning, to declare His word at Blackheath."

TO REV. W. HIRST.

"*March 6th, 1880.*

"We have just closed our accounts. It has been a week of great anxiety, and I am none the better for it physically. On February 23rd we were £25,328 short from the districts. On the 28th, the last day of the month, the deficiency had got down to £13,000. The next day, March 1st, it had gone further down to £8,500, and now it is a little over £4,000. I am glad it is no worse, but if you add to it £5,300 deficiency in legacies, and between £2,000 and £3,000 in special donations, it is still serious enough."

TO REV. A. H. REYNAR.

"*March 24th, 1880.*

"I have plenty on my hands with mission work, and finance, a few general administrative matters, and the *Recorder*. Mine is not an idle life, and I should not wish it to be. Thank God for congenial work, and the hope of a life beyond.

"We have trouble with Sir Isaac's will. One codicil was only attested by one witness, and we cannot get the will proved without an action, thus causing great delay and expense. There will be, I expect, £1,000 needlessly taken out of the estate by this one omission, which was the fault of the lawyer who drew the will, he being the one attesting witness. Money is often more trouble than profit. It will be fully twelve months, I expect, before anybody will receive anything. I am thankful that I care comparatively little about these things. Church matters are looking up, but finances are down everywhere, and we shall have many a long sad struggle to put matters right in missions, schools, institutions, etc. The Thanksgiving Fund is a wonderful success. It is likely to reach £300,000. We are in the heart of election strife. I am 'calm on tumult's wheel' though hoping inwardly for a change of government."

JOURNAL.

"*April 18th, 1880.*—On Thursday week I left home for a missionary tour, and spent last Sunday in Dublin, and the following days in Belfast. Good missionary meetings and growing interest. Everywhere I find the sympathy for missions maintained, but the funds languish. The elections over,—a decisive majority for the Liberals all along the line. They are independent of the Home Rulers, so that they need not truckle to them. This is a mercy. Several victims to the excitement of the contest, and one sudden death among the newly elected members. 'What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!'

"*May 16th.*—Since my last entry have had the excitement of the missionary anniversary, and worries of various kinds that have told rather unfavourably upon my health. Felt worse in the pulpit this morning than I have done for many months. Am sorely tempted about this recurring 'thorn in the flesh.' But 'Thou knowest, Lord, the weariness and sorrow.'"

TO MRS. MAY.

"*May 29th, 1880.*

"My heart is very full to-day, full of deep searchings, full of self-abasement for a life but partially answering its end. I seem to look back upon years wasted, or crowded with unfulfilled purposes of good, torso-statues of ideal beauty, never finished. I seem, like Grotius, to have spent my time in 'strenuously doing nothing.' The tears lie very near the outlet, and a little would make them flow freely. But there's a wideness in God's mercy. . . . 'Grace to cover all my sin.'"

TO REV. W. HIRST.

"*June 6th, 1880.*

"Many thanks for your birthday greeting. The day was spent partly in Sheffield, and partly in Lincoln. It was a solemn one. All birthday joys are chastened in me as the years roll on. I think of myself as going down the hill. . . . I am not tired of life. I cling to it, as you know, very closely, and would fain, if it were God's will, live even beyond the threescore years and ten. But I want to say cheerfully and always,

"'Lord, it belongs not to my care
Whether I die or live.'

. . . I am glad you are coming to Peckham. Æneas wants Achates. Things in general trouble me. I am below par, and my doctor orders me off; so I leave on Thursday (D.V.) for a fortnight in the West of Ireland."

About this time Dr. Punshon's invalid son sailed for Canada. The state of his health had improved

somewhat, and it was thought that the voyage might be of service to him. He himself had looked forward wistfully to the possibility of visiting Canada once more, and in February had written to his brother-in-law that there was nothing on earth he should like so well as to come and see him. He accordingly sailed on the 11th of June, spent a couple of months with friends amid the scenes of his former home, and returned, no worse, as it seemed, for the journey.

TO REV. A. H. REYNAR.

"GLENDALOUGH, *June 13th*, 1880.

"By the time this reaches you we hope and suppose you will have seen J. W. and heard the latest news of us all. You will see him thin and altered, but it is a great mercy that he has got through the winter so well; and we trust, if he will but be careful, the voyage may do him good, and prepare him for another winter. I think his mind is more softened and reverent since his illness. We have certainly had much comfort in him. I hope he will open his heart to you. Our prayers follow him duly and daily. If you see that the heat exhausts him, please expedite his return.

"I have been somewhat worn down with work and worry, and felt that my only chance of preparing for the fatigues of Conference lay in snatching a fortnight just now, so we accepted our good friend Alderman M'Arthur's invitation to migrate to the wilds of Connemara, and are here spending a sabbath quietly among the hills. We have worshipped this morning, but not in a temple made with hands; the nearest sanctuary being a Roman Catholic one, and that more than five miles away.

"I feel that I am no longer a young man. The weight of fifty-six years, not unlaborious, presses upon and sobers my spirit. And yet my heart is young, and I have a keen relish for life, with its stores of the beautiful, and its susceptibilities of the true, and would fain work yet for God and man, even until the allotted tale of years. Thank God for a Saviour and a hope which, amid all my mistrusts and depressions, I continue to cherish and to cling to!"

JOURNAL.

"*July 11th*.—Another bereavement among my friends. Mr. J. M——, who kindly entertained me a few weeks ago at Pontefract, has died, leaving seven children. Affected much under a sermon to-night by dear Mr. Boyce, a sermon of much practical godliness and wisdom from 'Thou shalt remember all the way,' etc. The Conference is upon us. I trust the

Spirit of the Master will be with us. There has been much prayer for the Divine blessing on this annual assembly.

"*July 18th.*—Assisted in preaching this morning in the city. Much engaged during the week in the stationing committee. The work increasingly difficult. Full of the preparations for the approaching Conference, towards which I do not look forward with unmixed hope or pleasure. I trust the good Lord will avert from us all that is harmful, and temper all our discussions with meekness of wisdom."

The Conference of 1880—Dr. Punshon's last—met in City Road Chapel, London. Its president was the Rev. E. E. Jenkins. Dr. Punshon's anticipations respecting it were not very cheerful, and he found himself less able than usual to enjoy the gathering together of the brethren. For one thing, the assembly was in his judgment too large. "A thousand men cannot deliberate," was his expression. He thought he discerned tendencies in the Conference that gave him pain. How far his discernment was a true one, and how far it was affected by the state of his health and spirits, cannot here be decided. "One beautiful episode of the week," he writes, "was the visit of Mr. Spurgeon to the Conference. He gave a characteristic address, full of mother-wit and gospel wisdom."

To him personally the most gratifying incident in connection with the Conference was the meeting with his old friend Richard Ridgill. Nearly forty years had elapsed since they parted, enthusiastic, light-hearted boys, the one dreaming of the ministry as his vocation, the other laughing at the notion, and setting his own hopes upon a colonist's life and fortunes. They met in City Road Chapel, Christian ministers of mature age and large experience, sobered by many trials, full of honours, trusted and loved through widely-extended Churches; but the years had only ripened the early friendship, and they clasped

each the other's hand with a deep and manly affection.

Mr. Ridgill, recalling the earlier and the later days of his intimacy with Morley Punshon, writes :—

“I spent much time with him in Sunderland in July and August 1841. I did not see him again before leaving England in the early part of 1842, and thirty-nine years had passed before we met once more. Our paths diverged. Each went his way, led by an unseen Divinity, to become a minister of Christ, he, rarely gifted and conscious of power, rejoicing as a strong man to run a race; I to plod patiently on in a remote sphere, sometimes among my own countrymen, sometimes among the heathen, or such as had recently been won from heathenism.

“There was an old understanding between us that if ever he became President of the Conference, I should, if possible, visit England. When that position was attained, he reminded me of the promise, but domestic affliction prevented my coming home. When the Missionary Committee thought proper to entrust me with the charge of a district, it was through him the official intimation reached me. I felt the honour tenfold more that the friend of my youth had gone out of his way to announce the appointment, and congratulated me in his own graceful and kindly way.

“When illness compelled me to visit England in 1880, his thoughtful kindness relieved me of all inconvenience upon my landing at Southampton, and provided that I should be conducted without delay from the Mission House to City Road Chapel. I cannot forget the promptness with which Dr. Punshon left the Conference when my arrival was made known to him, and the welcome with which he met me. One warm grasp of the hand, one glance of the kindling eye, was enough. He was ‘Roderick,’ and I was ‘Hardric’ again,—friends as of yore.

“He insisted that I should be his guest at *Tranby*, and gave me abundant proof of unchanged regard. A stranger among my brethren, I should have gone my way unnoticed and unknown, but as Dr. Punshon's friend I met with kindness on every hand.

“The day after my arrival at *Tranby* stands out prominently as one of enjoyment. We drove together through Hyde Park, and to the Albert Memorial and Hall. We then went to Westminster Abbey. Few men have been more favoured than I, to go through the venerable pile with such a guide, and to hear him speak with bowed head and bated breath of England's best and greatest sons. But every day and everywhere there was the same warm-heartedness, the same tender and unselfish anxiety to secure my comfort and contribute to my enjoyment.

“My last evening at *Tranby* was a happy one. We spent a part of it in looking over his collection of autographs. When all had retired, the

Doctor sat with me until near midnight, poring over the *Minutes of the Conference*. He was much concerned, as he more than once mentioned to me, at the number of returned missionaries—men still efficient for mission work—now engaged in English Circuits. We went through the ‘Stations,’ and marked every man who had laboured at one time or other in India or in South Africa. I was struck with the intimate acquaintance he had with the character and antecedents of every minister whose name appeared in the *Minutes*.

“Such was my last hour with my oldest and dearest friend. I had a hope that we might meet again—perhaps in Africa. It was not to be. We shall meet elsewhere.”

JOURNAL.

“*September 5th*, 1880.—At the close of my usual summer holiday I record the goodness of God to me, though I write in languor, and not in the firmest health. The Conference improved during its last week, though it became very fatiguing. Refreshed by renewed intercourse with dear Ridgill, my boyhood’s friend, now a firm-set, large-framed Chairman of a District, resembling good old William Shaw in gravity and wisdom. The review of the years since we met (nearly forty) humbling, inspiring, and wholesome. My time at Llandudno was pleasant; the weather superb, not a drop of rain. Visited the Eisteddfod at Carnarvon, and had a delightful visit of a couple of days to Treborth, with the family of Mr. Richard Davies, M.P. Sad fatalities by drowning during the month: in England, the Rev. Henry Wright, Secretary of the Church Missionary Society, and the Rev. Samuel Fiddian; in Canada, the daughter of the Rev. John Shaw, and Robert Wilkes, ex-M.P. for Toronto, and his son and daughter. Thus are lives mysteriously cut short in their prime. J. W. has returned from Canada, for which I thank God. But I fear he is no better. His emaciation is considerable, and his weakness great. Lord! into Thy hands I would commit my entire cause. Good old W. H. Taylor, under whose preaching my first impressions of religious truth were received, died on Monday last.

“*September 12th*.—A week of weakness and depression, personal and relative; have felt lower and more languid in body than for some months past. I want to breathe the spirit of Keble’s Hymn for 16th Sunday after Trinity:—

“‘Were it not better to lie still,
Let Him strike home and bless the rod,
Never so safe as when our will
Yields undiscern’d by all but God?’

Anxious about my son, about my work, about the missions, so many men coming home as are likely to render the proposed retrenchment no saving.

October 3rd.—Much from home during the past fortnight; working

in much weariness, anxiety, and pain. Have not felt so depressed in spirits and so low in general health for some time, and my faith has been, I fear, proportionately languid. Oppressed with many anxieties. J. W., I fear, worse, and the disease advancing. A return of pulpit trouble this morning.

“October 24th.—A little improved, perhaps, in health and spirits, but still needing great care, and much faith. The first breach in the ranks of the home ministry by the death of Joseph Portrey, a man who looked likelier for life than most. Dear little Alec M'Arthur released from his sufferings on Wednesday, and interred at Norwood. Humbled on Sabbath last by an interview with a brother who is, I trust only for a season, in darkness.

“November 7th.—Records of grief and blessing must always blend in this chequered life. J. W. has gone to Bournemouth, but is evidently worse and weaker. Percy is gone as his companion. Sir Francis Lycett died on Friday week after a brief and painful illness, and on Thursday of this week we buried him. He will be a great loss, for his zeal and enterprise were unequalled. He died well. A blessed convention at City Road on Tuesday. Every one seemed stirred up to take hold on God. I wish my consecration were a more cheerful one, but the continued nervous dyspepsia from which I suffer seems to interfere greatly with a happy faith. My pulpit trouble has recently been very painful, and this morning I had a sore season of faintness and depression before entering the Studley Road pulpit, but the Lord delivered me during the actual service.

“December 5th.—Still languid and infirm ; graciously helped through a great dread this morning at Tooting, but my general health, as it would seem, declining. Dear, good, warm-hearted, honourable William Panton called home this week. There are few living whom I esteemed and loved so well as he. Received my portion and my sons' portion from my uncle's will. I trust I am nothing elated, but thankful for such a provision as will keep me from anxiety.

“December 12th.—During the week obliged to pause in my work, and to spend two days at home ; a night of sleeplessness and great discomfort on Tuesday, followed by weariness and weakness.

“December 19th.—My dear friend Dr. Smith seriously unwell. He has had a slight paralytic seizure. Oh my God and Father, if it please Thee, cut not short a life so valuable ; bless the means of healing, and spare him to counsel and to serve Thy Church. Helped at Brixton this morning, while discoursing on Abraham's trial and faith. The Lord is good.

“January 16th, 1881.—My Christmas, a quiet and chastened one, was spent at Bournemouth, where we held a watch-night in the house, dear J. W. coming in at the close, and joining in the New Year's song. The dear invalid getting gradually weaker, and, as he expresses it, 'absurdly thin,' but calm, and often bright, though intractable as a patient.

Mr. Macdonald, who has been at Bournemouth since I left, expresses himself strongly and decisively that he is on the Rock, and relying upon the only true Saviour and Surety. The new year opened with the deaths of several friends : Mr. Henry Inskip, G. C. Bancroft, good Mr. Brown of Dalkey, and dear Dr. Jobson, whose silver cord was loosed on the 4th of January. My health varying, though for the most part a little better ; my experience of God not so active and constant as I should like. Depression gets me in its fangs, and hides the full vision of my Lord, fastening my eyes upon my own miserable self. Oh for a cloudless sky ! but perhaps that is not God's will, and I think I can say ' Thy will, not mine, O Lord.' "

The history of the year 1880, the last complete year of Dr. Punshon's life, has been told almost exclusively in his own words. It is a pathetic record, and will hardly fail to make its own impression, and supply its own interpretation. Reading it at least in the light of the after-wisdom furnished by the event, it is plain that he was coming to the end of service and of life. The sleeplessness, the many bodily distresses, the nervous exhaustion, and the recurring depression, were signs of a broken constitution. There was scarcely a vital organ whose working was not defective and accompanied by pain. Hardest of all to bear was the peculiar form of nervous depression which he called his "pulpit trouble." The pulpit, which, for so many years, had been to him what the field is to the warrior, or the threshing-floor to the husbandman,—the place of joyous labour and victorious war,—was now often hedged with fears and painful apprehensions, till it needed all his courage to approach it. Up to the moment for giving out the text he would be haunted by the dread of loss of memory, of reason, by the thought of sudden death. There were occasions when a great congregation was assembled, and while some brother-minister was con-

ducting the worship, the preacher whom they had come to hear was pacing the vestry in utter distress, and with the cold sweat of the conflict on his forehead, saying, "I cannot preach, I cannot preach." With a desperate effort at self-mastery, and casting himself upon the help of God, he would ascend the pulpit, often to find the snare broken and his soul set free, sometimes to preach like a man in chains and with a sword hanging above his head. The beginnings of this were seen in earlier years, but the elastic vigour of those years was gone, and the remedies of rest or travel, though they might alleviate, were now powerless to restore. And looking again at the *Journal* and letters that have been quoted, there are other signs—not so obvious, but equally significant—that his course was rounding to its close. His much chastened spirit dwelt more upon the unseen and the eternal, his weaned affection turned more and more to things above. Amid his scarcely ceasing activity, and notwithstanding his lifelong love of life, there is an undertone as though the soul were saying to herself, "Then would I flee away, and be at rest."

It may be said that to those who were about him at the time, these tokens, physical and spiritual, of his near departure were not visible. That may be. These things are easily overlooked amid the occupations and interests of hurrying days and weeks. And even those who watch with love's keenest vision may fail to interpret in all their meaning the hints of nature and of grace that there is a life being undermined to its fall, and another life ripening for removal to a higher sphere.

The *Journal* that has afforded so many glimpses of

his inner history, passes lightly over the labours with which this last year was filled. There was no withdrawal from work and responsibility, no outward expression of the conviction forming within that his work was well-nigh done. He wrought at the desk, and sat in committee, he travelled, and preached, and lectured, and addressed meetings as few men in vigorous health could have done. Besides fulfilling his manifold duties at the Mission House, he preached sixty-five times during the year, visiting almost every part of England; he lectured thirty-five times, and addressed no less than sixty-one public meetings, most of them on behalf of the Missionary Society. No wonder that he was considered a strong man yet, and that his friends felt their anxiety about him lessened as they saw him at work. None the less, it was the remnants of his life that he was spending—spending the last as he had spent the first, without stint or reckoning, for the Master he loved, and for that Master's cause. It is enough to say that his removal, though it seemed sudden to those who were unprepared for it,—and that included the Church generally and the public at large,—was not sudden in reality. All can see it now.

JOURNAL.

“*January 23rd, 1881.*—A week of unusually severe weather. On Tuesday, such a storm of wind and snow as can hardly be paralleled, at any rate since the railway system was established. I was snowed up on Wednesday near Rugby for two hours, and had to remain in that town all night, the line being blocked to London. I am consequently suffering from a rather heavy cold.”

This misadventure is further described in a letter to a friend:—

“I left Birmingham in the morning, got as far as Rugby towards London, then the train came to a stand in a most desolate and exposed

situation, with no house near, the snow pelting and penetrating, and the wind driving and howling. We remained there two hours, unable to get forward, or to persuade the authorities to take us back. At last we mutinied, and insisted on being taken back to Rugby, where we could refresh and communicate with our friends. This was at length done, and there I had to remain all night, reaching home a little after two to-day."

JOURNAL.

"*January 26th.*—Another stroke has fallen. I am again bereft. My firstborn son, the object of so many fond hopes, deep anxieties, and fervent prayers, died at Bournemouth to-night at 6.45. The end came with startling suddenness. Only the day before yesterday the doctor said he would probably live a month or two. He has been mercifully preserved from suffering acutely and protractedly. The letter written yesterday which gave the first intimation of danger did not arrive until after the telegram which announced his death. I have good hope that he is with the Lord, and this is an unspeakable comfort. He was reticent on the best things, but opened his mind to Mr. Ingram, Mr. Macdonald, to Mrs. May, and lately to Percy. My only regret, since it was God's will that he should go, is that I did not see him at the last. May this sorrow move me to a deeper and holier consecration. My Lord and Saviour, Thou Who hast redeemed me and mine, four of whom, I trust, are now with Thee, hear and accept my vow."

TO REV. A. H. REYNAR.

"*January 26th, 1881.*

"The end has come, as it so often does, with startling suddenness. He was very reticent, as you know; but all points to his secure resting on Jesus, and his hope of eternal life. We are in deep sorrow. No one knows how many hopes are quenched in this grave. I feel, like Burke, that 'I live in an inverted order.' . . . My heart must be proud indeed if these repeated chastenings do not humble me."

"BOURNEMOUTH, *January 28th.*

"I send another line from this place, where we arrived yesterday just to have a last look at our 'beautiful clay.' It was the face of an angel that seemed to smile upon us last night from the coffin, so exquisitely carved were the marble features, and so heavenly the upward aspect. I am greatly comforted in the thought of the wonderful change which affliction wrought in his feelings and sentiments toward religion. He loved his Bible intensely, and scarcely read anything else. He tired of all trifling conversation, expressed himself, even in moments of deep personal humiliation, as clinging to the Rock, and his last articulate word was 'Jesus.' He died from sheer exhaustion, and with no consciousness of the struggle, the laboured breathing becoming gentler, and then ceasing. So he is beyond suffering, and we, while we mourn a splendid life, cut short even

at the moment when it was awakening to its true possibilities, give thanks unto God that 'a man is born' into the life that is eternal."

From Bournemouth Dr. Punshon went to Bristol, and spent a few quiet days with his dear and ever faithful friends, the Mays, who during his son's illness had been an unfailing source of help and comfort both to the sufferer and to his father. He then returned to London, and on Tuesday, the 8th of February, fulfilled an engagement to lecture on *The Men of the Mayflower*. It was his last lecture. On Saturday, the 12th, he went down to Walsall, intending to preach there on the Sunday. But that hope was not to be realised. Little as he knew it, little as those about him thought it, he had preached his last sermon nearly a month before. It was at Blackheath, on Sunday, the 16th of January, that he preached for the last time. The text was Heb. xi. 17, 18, "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said that in Isaac shall thy seed be called." The night of his arrival at Walsall he was taken suddenly and alarmingly ill. A doctor was sent for; every attention was shown him by his good hosts, Mr. and Mrs. Brewer, and the more alarming symptoms passed away. But he was unable to take the service on Sunday, and in a day or two returned home.

To E. D——.

"February 17th, 1881.

"We reached home this afternoon. I had a sharp attack at Walsall, for two hours breathing with difficulty, and I had to call up the house, and send for a doctor in the middle of the night. It was an old attack, aggravated by circumstances, and induced what the doctor called 'terrible disturbance of the heart's action.' I am just in the state in which I was

at the Bradford Conference, only with the added weight of three additional years. I am better, have cancelled all my public engagements, and on Thursday, March 3rd, I hope to start with my wife and Percy for the south of France. My Committee have requested me to take rest, and I am reluctantly persuaded to make it absolute for five or six weeks."

JOURNAL.

"*February 20th.*—My health suffering much from the reaction after my long suspense and recent sorrow. Went last week to Walsall to fulfil an engagement, and had so sharp an attack that I was unable to preach, and now am enjoined absolute rest for some time. I feel all the symptoms of declining health, am much thinner, my digestive apparatus entirely out of order, and there is a fearful amount of nervous exhaustion. I am in the Lord's hands, and in my best moments can trust Him with myself for life or death. But I am weak and frail, and my languor makes me fretful, and my unquiet imagination often disturbs my faith. I feel that I must go softly. I should like, if it be the Lord's will, to serve the Church of my affection yet for ten or twelve years; but He knows what is best, and will bring it about. Oh for a simple and more constant trust, a trust which confides my all, present and future, into my Father's care!"

This is the last entry in the *Journal* in which for five-and-twenty years he had recorded the events of his life, and had kept watch over himself in the sight of God. The aspiration with which it closes is that which runs through its pages. It is the prayer, ever answered, ever urged afresh, in which he lived and laboured, and for which there remained only a final consummation.

On the 3rd of March Dr. Punshon, accompanied by his wife and son Percy, and Mrs. and Mr. E. Whelpton, left London. A few days were spent in Paris. On the Sunday morning he attended the Chapel in the Rue Roquépine, heard Mr Gibson preach "a useful and practical sermon," and was comforted and refreshed at Holy Communion. Journeying southward by easy stages, they lingered on the way at Lyons, Avignon, and Nîmes, spending a Sunday at the city last named. Although "very

poorly," he went to the Methodist Chapel in the morning, and heard a sermon from M. Mallié on Col. iii. 3. He afterwards visited the grave of Emile Cook, and in the afternoon spoke for half an hour to "some twenty bright young English girls belonging to Madame F.'s Bible-class, thankful for the opportunity of doing a little for the Master."

They reached Cannes on the 16th, and for some days his health and spirits seemed to improve.

NOTE BOOK OF JOURNEY.

"*March 17th.*—Mooned about Cannes in delicious and restful idleness. Attended a meeting in the Scotch Church on behalf of the asylum of Pasteur Bost, where 450 orphans, epileptics, idiots, and blind are housed, and helped to garner up such little joy as may remain to them in life. Much impressed by hearing that the faculties of each are utilised; that the idiots, who have often great muscular strength, draw the carriages of the infirm, and the infirm lead the blind, while, in other cases, the blind cheer the infirm.

"*March 20th.*—Attended service in the Scotch Church; a good sermon from Mr. Heming, of Culross. Walked up to the Belle Vue to see Mr. Arthur, who is ill in bed."

Of this interview Mr. Arthur writes:—

"The last time I saw him was at my bedside, as I was then somewhat indisposed. His talk was all about the Missions, the Connexion, the coming Œcumenical Conference, and the interests of the work of God throughout the world. Little did I foresee that in a few days the old lesson, 'In such an hour as ye think not,' would once more be rung into my ears. Members of my family told me of the delightful spirits he seemed to be in during an excursion on the *Estérel* mountains, and especially of the interest with which, on another day, he watched the process of manufacturing in porcelain at *Vallauris*. As the potter out of his lump evolved form after form, he watched intently till the tears ran down his cheeks, and then said in his own telling tones—tones they would never have forgotten, even if they had not been so solemnly called to mind a little while afterwards—

" 'Mould as Thou wilt Thy passive clay.' "

NOTE BOOK.

"*March 22nd.*—Left our beautiful hotel this morning, intending to drive from Nice to Mentone. Went, greatly to our discomfort, through

clouds of dust and blasts of wind for about two miles, until we got to the bottom of the ascent, then turned back ignominiously, and came by train to Mentone.

“ March 23rd.—How little do we know what is before us ! Retired to bed restless and out of sorts. Was no worse than I had been aforetime, until, about half-past two in the morning, I was seized with a most severe attack of difficulty in breathing, with crepitation, which continued in its severity for nearly three hours. I do not think I could have lasted much longer without relief. Had to send for a doctor ; got a little relief about 6 a.m. I have not for a long time been nearer the eternal world. There was, the doctor said, a good deal of bronchial congestion, and there was some blood colouring the expectoration, accompanied, as in the attack at Walsall, with heart disturbance and intermittent pulse.”

Two or three days afterwards he was able to continue his journey, and with some difficulty reached Genoa. From Sunday, the 27th, Dr. Punshon grew worse, and on the 29th his wife telegraphed to London for Dr. Hill, his usual medical attendant. The doctor arrived two days later, and under his care, and with the kindly companionship of the Rev. Hugh Johnston, an old Canadian friend, the homeward journey was begun. He had a presentiment that he should not recover, and longed to reach home, that, if it were God's will, he might die there. He bore the journey to Turin fairly well, but complained of pain at the back of the lungs. His physician made an examination, and found that there was congestion.

On Sunday, April 3rd, he wrote one or two short notes. In the afternoon he prayed with his wife, but as night came on his suffering returned. Dr. Hill sat up with him, and did what was possible to give him relief. For his friend, and for his almost heart-broken wife, it was a night of great distress.

Recovering strength in some measure, another stage of the journey was attempted, and Paris was reached on the evening of the 5th. They found the

weather there damp and chill. After a day's rest he came on to London, and with unspeakable relief found himself in the home he had feared he should not see again. He walked straight into his study, and looked round with a smile of happy, restful satisfaction, and at his wish Mr. Johnston offered thanks to God for bringing them home in safety. A day or two later, Dr. Radcliffe and Dr. Hill made a careful examination of the lungs and heart, and were able to hold out some hope of improvement.

On Sunday morning his wife read to him the Collect and Gospel and Epistle for the day. His spirit was gentle and devout. Prayer was offered for him at Brixton Chapel, and at his Tabernacle by Mr. Spurgeon, who sent him a message of love and sympathy, bidding him be of good cheer, and telling him that his own seasons of sickness were times of deep despondency. He spoke freely with Mr. Johnston of himself, and his hope in the Redeemer. He said, "I am not afraid to die, but I have a love of life. . . . It is the rapture of living. . . . I do not like to think that my work is ended." His niece said to him, "Uncle, perhaps after this illness your health will be better than ever." He answered, "Yes, I have heard of persons being better than ever after a serious illness." Then, after a pause, he added, "But it may lead to an entrance to the better world, of which I am very unworthy; but I expect, through the merits of Jesus Christ, to enter in."

Towards the evening of Wednesday, the 13th, he became restless, and got out of bed. He rested in an easy chair, and did not return to bed again. It was evident that he was very ill. Mr. Johnston again

engaged in prayer, and he responded fervently to its petitions. His friend said to him, "Never fear, dear doctor, you will have an abundant entrance into the kingdom." His answer was, "I do not ask that. Let me only have peace. My testimony is my life." Shortly afterwards his colleague, Mr. Osborn, spent a few minutes with him in prayer and spiritual communion. The difficulty of breathing increased, and turning to his wife he said, "My darling, if it were not for you I should ask God to take me out of this suffering; but for your sake I should like to live." About one o'clock in the morning, as the doctor was pouring out some medicine for him, he saw a change come over the patient. "Am I going, doctor?" he asked. "Yes," was the answer. In her anguish his wife said to him, "Oh, my darling, what have you to say to me?" He answered, "I have loved you fondly; love Jesus, and meet me in heaven." His second, now his eldest, son was with them. The youngest was absent. His wife asked again, "And Percy, what message for him?" "Tell him to meet me in heaven." Then, looking upward, he added with a firm voice and deeply reverent tone, "CHRIST IS TO ME A BRIGHT REALITY. JESUS! JESUS!" There was a smile, as of kindling rapture, then his head drooped, and William Morley Punshon entered into rest.

He died early in the morning of Thursday, April 14th, 1881, within a few weeks of the completion of his fifty-seventh year.

The news of his death was wholly unlooked for, and pained surprise mingled with the sorrow that was everywhere called forth. At first it was hoped that

there was some mistake, but when the tidings were confirmed, there was a feeling of something like national regret, and throughout the Methodist Churches a grief such as had not been known for a generation or more. By almost every section of the press, and every class in the community, tributes of esteem were paid to his memory. Expressions of sympathy poured in upon the bereaved household from every side.

On Tuesday, the 19th of April, he was buried in Norwood cemetery. The body was first borne to Brixton Hill Chapel, where through many varying years he had ministered, and been ministered to, in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The chapel was filled with ministers and laymen from all parts of the country, a congregation profoundly touched with a common grief. The service was conducted by the Revs. F. J. Sharr, Dr. Rigg, Hugh Johnston, and M. C. Osborn. The President of the Conference, the Rev. E. E. Jenkins, delivered an address, in which, after referring to other losses recently sustained, he said :—

“ In each of the cases I have mentioned the stroke was partly broken by the premonition of its approach ; but in this instance it descended upon us almost without warning. We were secure in our possession and in our hope at one moment, and in the next our house was left unto us desolate. There had been, as you are aware, considerable, but we scarcely believed ominous, physical derangement ; but there was no doubt in the mind of any one of us, including, I believe, his medical adviser, that perfect and prolonged rest would bring back to their wonted tone a heart strained to exhaustion by sorrow and care, and a mind overtaxed, not only by official obligations, but by engagements to help everybody and every cause, made in fatal forgetfulness of self. We know now that the provision for repose, to which we compelled our dear colleague to consent, ought to have been made several months ago, and would have been made but for the stubborn reluctance with which he received every proposal to go out of harness,

even for a week ; and even his holidays were not seasons of relaxation, but variations of toil. His public movements were watched, his resting for a night in town or village was an event for the Methodists in the place, a service was exacted, and the largest rooms to be had were obtained and crowded with people anxious to hear the great orator. It was this tension of energy, never relaxed, never graduated to meet just the requirements of a service—for he gave out all his strength, whether the audience numbered 500 or 5,000 ;—it was this prodigal expenditure of force from a very early period of his remarkable career, and during a life charged with the excitements, the anxieties, and the vicissitudes of an unequalled popularity, that bowed down in the prime of his life the Samson of our Israel. There is no ground for surprise at the event which has made the Connexion at home and abroad mourn as one man, and has pierced the hearts of multitudes who belong to other churches acknowledging Christ our common Head, and who share our loss in that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel. We may rather wonder, in reviewing calmly Dr. Punshon's career, and recalling the work which he did during a ministry of thirty-six years in this country, and in Canada, and America, the quality of his work and its results, and remembering his acute personal sufferings and bereavements and griefs, that enter into a man's heart and life,—I say, we may rather wonder, even with strength such as he possessed, that he did not under such a strain collapse long ago. In Dr. Punshon our Church possessed a rare gift from the Father of lights. His mind possessed two classes of faculties, not often found together in eminent promineney—the imaginative and the practical ; and an imperious intellect governed both, giving to the imaginative power a definite work, and to the practical a logical coherency and consistency. The surpassing endowment of his youth was memory, and it made his mind a vast storehouse of knowledge, much of it in the very word-form in which it was acquired. He not only forgot nothing, but he commanded everything he had learned. It is not unlikely, though I cannot speak with precise knowledge, that in the time of his earlier growth his memory somewhat fettered the action of his other powers ; these, at any rate, asserted themselves conspicuously in his later years, when called into use by the various responsibilities of official life. The gifts which I have mentioned, when there is a commanding physique, make the orator ; or, if education and opportunity concur, the statesman ; or, if tastes and the success of earlier attempts determine it, the poet. William Morley Punshon selected none of these professions ; he was led by the star of Providence to 'the place where the young Child lay,' and brought the tribute of his life, the gold, the frankincense, and the myrrh of his genius, and placed them at the feet of Jesus, all unconscious of the worth of his offering ; and if he had suspected it, he would have considered it too mean to merit his Lord's acceptance.

“The calling of a Methodist preacher was the first and last distinction of his life ; he aspired to no loftier place upon earth than the Methodist pulpit, and it soon became apparent that God had raised up a messenger to the Churches endowed with exceptional power. I believe he had little professional training for the pulpit ; but, whether eminence were granted to him or denied to him, he purposed, by Divine help, to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. He knew there was no royal road to pulpit power ; he knew that, being called into the ministry, the pulpit was the central position of his calling, and not a stepping-stone to something else. He was sometimes found elsewhere, but he brought with him the inspiration of the preacher, and rendered eloquent service out of the pulpit in the cause of the pulpit. He would have deemed his life a failure, if not a mockery, if, whatever else had prospered, his pulpit had failed ; his most careful work, and his chief joy to the last was preaching Jesus. . . . The bearing of his mind towards the sceptical spirit of the day was equally remarkable ; happily for the power and usefulness of Dr. Punshon’s ministry, he had no intellectual sympathy with doubt ; but he had much sympathy with doubters whose distrust was timid, and tentative, and anxious, not because of any reserved questioning of his own, but mental solicitude of this class appealed to his love and honesty, and his tenderness for distress. Moreover, his mind was too large and too generous to consider everybody in the wrong place who did not stand just where he stood, or who reached this standpoint by other steps than those which had conducted him to his position. In his own case between conviction of sin and the cross of Jesus he lost nothing, either by loitering in indecision or by hesitation in reasoning, and he proclaimed a salvation not discovered by reason, but manifested to faith. He believed with a kind of untutored simplicity, and preached results rather than processes ; and he preached to the people, and for the people, and although he sometimes soared high or dived deep, it was seldom in pursuit of abstract ideas ; in such instances as I have referred to he was generally following the issue of some well-known truth, demolishing the hopeless security of the sinner, or letting in a new light upon the spirit of the inquirer. Wherever his mind led his hearers, he was never in a mist. He had his own style, and it was not another’s ; it was the visible image of his own mind, a body that grew out of it and not a robe woven for it. An imitator may take the picture-words of this great preacher, and use them, and be unintelligible, as well as ridiculous. He was never vague, and his language, though never so uncommon, his robust sense, and unaffected earnestness made eloquent expression contribute to the clearness and force of his meaning, and at times, when under the sway of strong feeling, his style assumed an extraordinary simplicity and compression and vigour. . . . I never knew Dr. Punshon intimately until my

appointment to the Mission House. My missionary life had enabled me to appreciate the services which he rendered the Society on the platform ; and I think that not even in the lecture hall—mighty as he was there—was his oratory half so impressive as when on the platform of a missionary society. The prophetic element of missions fascinated him ; it was just fitted to kindle his imagination and arouse his overflowing sympathy ; then his grasp of detail, his strong faith in the ultimate empire of his Lord ; all these qualities concurred to make him one of the most powerful missionary speakers ever given, I should imagine, to any Church. But I said just now that I did not know him intimately until I went to the Mission House, and I never knew until then how much his heart was in this missionary platform work. I never knew it until in the close association of counsel and mutual responsibility I discerned what I cannot otherwise describe, though I use a very sacred word, than as the travail of his soul when the details and stress of administration threatened to impede the glorious work on the advancement of which he had set his heart."

From the chapel at Brixton Hill the funeral procession, consisting of some fifty carriages, including that of the Lord Mayor of London, passed slowly on to Norwood. There some thousands of persons were assembled, and amid the most impressive signs of sorrow, affection, and esteem, his body was committed to the ground, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Memorial services were held, and funeral sermons preached, in London and in several of the provincial towns. In Canada his loss was felt almost as keenly as in England. At Toronto a memorial service of an unexampled kind was held in the Metropolitan Church, the church he had been instrumental in erecting, and which remains the most august of the visible monuments that record his labours. A vast audience filled the building. Upon the platform, and around the Communion, were gathered the Methodist ministers of Toronto and Yorkville, and many belong-

ing to other Christian denominations. The venerable Dr. Ryerson referred to his long and happy intimacy with Dr. Punshon, and to the services he had rendered to Canadian Methodism. He spoke of him as a preacher of a pure gospel, a master of graceful and persuasive eloquence, and a lecturer almost peerless. Dr. Punshon had left his mark upon their ministry and all their institutions. Liberal and benevolent, he gave to churches and institutions in Canada more than he received in payment for his lectures. His name would ever be fragrant in the land he loved so well. The Rev. Mr. Powis spoke as the representative of the Toronto Ministerial Association. "There are men who, though connected with a particular denomination, yet cross over all boundary lines, and belong to all the Churches. Such a one was Dr. Punshon. True to the polity and principles of Methodism, he was too good a Christian, and too apostolic a minister, to deny to others the liberty he craved for himself. Those of us who live outside the pale of your Church had for him the highest respect and the truest admiration." Other speakers followed, including Dr. Nelles, of the Victoria University, and Dr. Sutherland, Missionary Secretary.

Resolutions and addresses of condolence were received by Dr. Punshon's family from the following public bodies or associations:—

The Montreal Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada, held at Napanee, May 1881.

The District Committee of the Cape of Good Hope District, held in Cape Town, January 1882.

The Italian Methodist Ministers of the Rome District, by Rev. Francesco Sciarelli, June 1881.

The District Committees of the First London, the Second London, the Kent, and Newcastle-on-Tyne Districts, May 1881.

The Council of the Evangelical Alliance.
The Lambeth Auxiliary of the Sunday School Union.
The Directors of the Star Life Assurance Association.
The Directors of the Wesleyan Methodist Newspaper Company.
The London Ministers' Meeting.
The Belfast Ministers' Meeting.
The Quarterly Meeting of the Kensington, Lambeth, and Sheffield
(Norfolk Street) Circuits.
The Wesleyan Missionary Committee.
The Home Missionary Committee.
The Wesleyan Education Committee.
The Metropolitan Chapel Building Fund Committee.
The Committee for the Extension of Methodism.
The Book Committee.
The Committee of the Children's Home.

Some indication of the extent to which Dr. Punshon was held in affection and esteem is furnished by the letters of sympathy that were addressed to Mrs. Punshon after his death. They number several hundreds, and, while differing widely in various respects, they fasten with wonderful unanimity upon some few traits of his character. His humility and unselfishness, his interest in the things of others, his kindness and lovable goodness,—these were the qualities that knit the hearts of his friends to him, and to which they refer with every variety of expression. Other letters speak more of his public character and labours, and of the loss sustained in his removal. The few which can appear here must be chiefly of the latter class. They are a tribute and a testimony that can neither be recorded in detail nor entirely passed over.

FROM REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

“April 19th, 1881.

“We are all mourners with you. The entire Church laments its grievous bereavement. He who stood foremost as a standard-bearer is fallen. I feel like crying, ‘Alas, my brother!’ Yet, thank God! he is taken from us without a spot on his escutcheon. He has fought a

good fight. . . . Your dear husband's kindness to me makes me feel that I have lost a brother, and it comes closely home to me when I consider that he is taken and I am left, though I should have thought him much the stronger man."

FROM REV. NEWMAN HALL TO W. MEWBURN, ESQ.

"April 18th, 1881.

"I feel so much the death of Dr. Punshon that I must relieve myself by expressing my feelings to some one, and I know no one to whom he was personally so dear as to yourself. Therefore, bear with me.

"He is a loss beyond words to the Methodist Church, to which from a youth he was loyal with a noble disinterestedness and persistency. He began his circuit work at Marden, a village near Maidstone, my native town. He began his career just as I was going to college; thus, while six years my junior, he was just my own ministerial age. How I remember the stir he made in Kent, and the delight of the people who went long distances to hear his even then thrilling eloquence. There is no part of the Methodist world which will not feel the blank caused by his removal, for he had been in every part of it, dropping pearls, or rather seeds, to grow up for the Master's glory. But he is a loss to the whole Church. How few there are who can so speak of eternal truth as to command the attention of all,—the frivolous, the sceptical, the hostile.

"As a lecturer he was without a rival; his narratives so clear, his pictures so vivid, his language so chaste, his delivery so captivating and impressive. And these lectures, so called, were disguised sermons, full of the highest truth which many thus heard who would have kept aloof from an ordinary 'sermon.'

"A standard-bearer has fallen from the army of Israel. We can ill spare one, especially such as he. May God raise up others. This we want even more than money and buildings—consecrated talent. We have talent not consecrated; we have consecration without talent. God give us more of the combination seen in Morley Punshon."

FROM REV. DR. ALLON.

"April 21st, 1881.

"He was a man of rare gifts of eloquence and goodness; his fidelity to the truth of Christ and his Christian goodness and earnestness filling his preaching with moral power. Men such as he are a witness and a power, not for one section of the Church only, but for the whole of it. I am sure that *we* shall feel his loss almost as much as those to whom he denominationally belonged."

FROM REV. DONALD FRASER.

"April 22nd, 1881.

"I learn with sorrow that your good and able husband, my valued

friend, has passed away. Had it been in my power, I should have much liked to pay due respect to his worth by attending his funeral.

“It seems but a little time since I stayed one night under the same roof with you at Leeds. How pleasant and companionable he was ! I am sure that you have the sympathy and prayers of thousands of the children of God, and I desire to unite my condolences with theirs.

“Dr. Punshon’s removal is a great loss, not to the Wesleyan Communion alone, but to Christian society at large, and especially to that missionary cause which had so much of his ardent and eloquent advocacy.”

FROM REV. DR. RIGG.

“*April 23rd, 1881.*

“There was no one in Methodism with whom I so much desired and rejoiced to cultivate friendship as your noble husband ; not only because he was so pre-eminent a man for ability, and fame, and influence, but because he was so true and faithful, so perfectly sweet-tempered and fine-toned a man. It was one of the hopes, and, I might almost say, dreams of my life that, as years passed on, we might become more and more intimate and united. I believe he knew how much I honoured and how abundantly I trusted him. With all my hopes for the future welfare and best development of Methodism, thoughts of him and of his influence and character were inseparably combined. And now his removal leaves me so much poorer in life, and hope, and friendship, as, alas ! it leaves our bereaved Methodism strangely and sadly poorer, and indeed makes a sorrowful gap in the evangelical array and brotherhood of our country.

“How much Dr. Punshon lived in the affection of his brethren is known to all. Perhaps the chief reason of this was that he was so absolutely free himself from all envy, so guiltless of detraction. Those who are pre-eminent for gifts seldom escape the breath of envy. If he seemed to escape, it was very much, I think, because his own nature appeared to be innocent of envy towards others, as his tongue was ever kept pure from the taint of malice or calumny. He was loved for his nobility not less than he was admired for his genius.

“To me the memory of my too limited intercourse with him will always be precious, and the hope of reunion with him will make what remains to me of life more sacred, and touch it with a tenderer light.”

FROM REV. JOSEPH HARGREAVES.

“*May 2nd, 1881.*

“Dr. Punshon was a man greatly beloved. It would be as difficult to find his enemy as his equal. A prince among preachers, he was ‘an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures.’ Modest with regard to his own attainments, he could appreciate and acknowledge every excellency he saw in others. He was a sincere, affectionate, and constant friend.

He was a wise counsellor. . . . Popularity of the most extraordinary kind never led him to despise others, or to think of himself more highly than he ought. He was genial as a sunbeam, and guileless as a little child. Modest dignity and beautiful simplicity made him the wonder and admiration of those who were honoured with his friendship."

This brief selection from the many letters called forth by Dr. Punshon's death may close with one that shows how widely his loss was felt, and that the tidings of his death carried the sense of a personal bereavement to those who had never seen his face.

FROM J. H. SAMUEL.

"WESLEYAN HIGH SCHOOL AND TRAINING INSTITUTION,

"LAGOS, *April 30th*, 1881.

"Though a total stranger, yet please permit the young African to sympathise with you in the death of your much respected and ever-to-be-remembered husband. From his general character as a friend to, and a lover of, my race, and from other qualities, he is one over whose name I have often rejoiced.

"Great was the shock to the Wesleyan community in Lagos when the news of his death arrived ; and the sorrow and anguish that pervaded my mind on receiving the information at the Mission House are such as I cannot express. Since then my mind has been greatly troubled as to how I should show a sign of my sorrow and respect, and at last I have resolved to do so by writing. Hence, dear madam, you will please pardon this presumption in a young coloured stranger, for it is a presumption caused by deep sympathy."

"AND WE BLESS THY HOLY NAME FOR ALL THY SERVANTS DEPARTED THIS LIFE IN THY FAITH AND FEAR ; BESEECHING THEE TO GIVE US GRACE SO TO FOLLOW THEIR GOOD EXAMPLES, THAT WITH THEM WE MAY BE PARTAKERS OF THY HEAVENLY KINGDOM. GRANT THIS, O FATHER, FOR JESUS CHRIST'S SAKE, OUR ONLY MEDIATOR AND ADVOCATE. AMEN."

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be biassed by friendship,—for they have the evidence of the wide popularity which the work has already attained in America. The title seems to me very happily chosen. It reminds us that we are not the only tenants of our farms—that the fields and hedges, woods and waters, all around us, teem with a complex, rich, and interesting life. But nature will speak only to those who listen with love and sympathy; and of this varied existence Dr. McCook has proved himself one of the most patient and loving students."

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